RQA Programme strands

- **quality information and advice service for colleges**
  - A front-line information, advice and support helpline for colleges, backed by packs on good practice and run for the RQA Programme by the Association of Colleges

- **information and advice for work-based learning**
  - A front-line information, advice and support helpline for work-based learning providers, backed by packs on good practice and run for the RQA Programme by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion

- **quality improvement**
  - Regional networks and onsite support for providers on developing and implementing quality improvements

- **benchmarking and information**
  - Help for managers to benchmark activities, improve processes and make better use of their own data

- **development projects**
  - College and work-based learning providers’ projects on strategies to improve retention and achievement

- **leadership for achievement**
  - Help for governors and boards, training managers and team leaders to improve learners’ achievement and the quality of provision

- **sharing effective practice**
  - Regional practitioner networks and partnership activities to develop and promote good practice in cross-college and curriculum areas

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...it is essential to accelerate the pace of reform to raise standards in the learning and skills sector so that success is achievable for all learners, regardless of where they live or with which publicly-funded provider they are enrolled.

*Success for all, DfES 2002*

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For more information about the Raising Quality and Achievement Programme please visit [www.rqa.org.uk](http://www.rqa.org.uk)

For information and advice please contact the Raising Quality and Achievement Programme helpline:

- **for colleges**
  - Tel 020 7820 8346

- **for work-based learning providers**
  - Tel 020 7820 8419
The Raising Quality and Achievement Programme is run by the Learning and Skills Development Agency in partnership with the Association of Colleges and the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion.

- We aim to reach all colleges and work-based learning providers.
- We offer extra support to colleges and work-based learning providers that are receiving Standards Fund money to improve their practice.
- All our activity themes are backed by a programme of research and evaluation.
- The Raising Quality and Achievement Programme is funded by a grant to the Learning and Skills Development Agency from the Learning and Skills Council.
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Tel 020 7827 4611 for work-based learning providers

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Success for all, DfES 2002
### Contacts

**Benchmarking and Information**

Help for managers to benchmark activities, improve processes and make better use of their own data.

Contact Jane Owen  
Tel 020 7297 9083  
jowen@LSDA.org.uk

**Other RQA Programme Strands**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Helpline 020 7827 4611 |
| Information and Advice Service for Work-based Learning | A front-line information, advice and support helpline for work-based learning providers, backed by packs on good practice and run for the RQA Programme by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion. Contact James Holyfield  
Helpline 020 7840 8346 |
| Quality Improvement | Regional networks and onsite support for providers on developing and implementing quality improvements. Contact Linda Bye  
Tel 020 7297 9078 |
| Development Projects | College and work-based learning providers' projects on strategies to improve retention and achievement. Contact Vikki Smith  
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Tel 020 7297 9085 |
| Sharing Effective Practice | Regional practitioner networks and partnership activities to develop and promote good practice in cross-college and curriculum areas. Contact Muriel Green  
Tel 0115 929 9097 |

**The RQA Programme**

The RQA Programme website (www.rqa.org.uk) gives you instant access to downloadable quality information packs, updates on policy, RQA Programme events, publications, improvement case studies and a discussion forum.

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For more information about the RQA Programme, please visit www.rqa.org.uk.
Benchmarking and the effective use of management information are vital for the successful management of all organisations.

**what we do**

The benchmarking and information strand will help managers of colleges and work-based learning providers to make better use of the information they already have and to benchmark their service against other providers and, where appropriate, other kinds of organisation.

**what is benchmarking?**

Benchmarking is a structured process for learning from the practice of others, internally or externally, who are leaders in their field or with whom there are legitimate comparisons. It is not just about comparing costs or taking part in a survey. It requires you to understand and map your own processes. Once gaps or shortfalls have been identified, benchmarking partners can be found. Your processes can be improved by learning from partners’ methods and by adapting and adopting good practice.

**management information**

Management information is more than the statistical returns required by the Learning and Skills Council and inspectorates. Good quality information is vital to your management decisions.

Information on retention and achievement and student satisfaction is becoming more readily available. But not all providers have the capacity to collect, analyse or make full use of it.

**services we offer**

- Learning PROBE (promoting business excellence), a diagnostic benchmarking tool that enables colleges and other providers to self-assess and compare themselves with others
- A benchmarking database of organisations willing to take part in benchmarking projects
- Workshops and support for management teams in target-setting and using data for planning
- Benchmarking services including questionnaires on staff and learner satisfaction
- Support to produce action plans following staff or learner questionnaires
- Easy-to-follow guides including:
  - Benchmarking for the learning and skills sector
  - Consultancy for free: making the most of complaints
  - It’s people thing: demystifying college information
  - Making quality sense: a guide to quality, tools and techniques, awards and the thinking behind them.
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development projects
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vsmith@LSDA.org.uk

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Helpline 020 7840 8346

quality improvement
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Contact Linda Bye
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benchmarking and information
Help for managers to benchmark activities, improve processes and make better use of their own data.
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leadership for achievement
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Contact John Thompson
Tel 020 7297 9085

sharing effective practice
Regional practitioner networks and partnership activities to develop and promote good practice in cross-college and curriculum areas.
Contact Muriel Green
Tel 0115 929 9097

Contacts for more information about the RQA Programme please visit www.rqa.org.uk
Development projects help with practical strategies to improve retention and achievement.

**what we do**

The development projects strand:

- funds providers to take part in development activities
- encourages and evaluates innovative approaches to raising achievement
- uses action research to develop effective practice models and materials
- develops action research skills in colleges and work-based learning
- disseminates experience, knowledge and materials as widely as possible.

The projects provide valuable messages for others and help embed initiatives so that improvement strategies are sustainable and more effective.

**projects to date**

There have been four rounds of development projects. Rounds 1 and 2 involved 160 colleges in England. Round 3 focused on particular areas for improvement, including:

- value added and target setting
- tutoring for achievement
- curriculum redesign
- teaching and learning strategies
- attendance monitoring and follow-up.

One hundred Round 4 college projects include strategies for:

- placing students on appropriate programmes
- improving achievement at Levels 1 and 2
- target-setting for vocational qualifications
- improving assessment practice and design
- identifying and supporting ‘at-risk’ students.

Round 5 work-based learning projects started in summer 2002. They focus on trainee retention and success. Topics include:

- integrating on- and off-the-job training
- strategies to prevent early drop-out
- achievement and progression
- working with others.

**Case studies** of completed development projects can be searched and downloaded from the Raising Quality and Achievement Programme website ([www.rqa.org.uk](http://www.rqa.org.uk)).

**raising quality and achievement programme**
other RQA Programme strands

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leadership for achievement
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Leadership skills are essential for those involved in governance, supervision and management of education and training.

**what we do**
The leadership for achievement strand offers support for all levels of staff.

**leadership**
Leadership enables others to work to best effect, helps achieve improved success rates for learners and provides a crucial element to achieve positive outcomes from change situations.

**the challenge**
Raising learner participation, retention, achievement and progression is the goal.

**a solution**
Understanding and using leadership skills, whatever your role, can help you meet that challenge.

**how leadership supports success**

**Governors and supervisory boards**
Governors and supervisory boards need a clear sense of purpose to be strategic and forward-thinking. They also need to monitor and review their organisation's performance and the quality of the teaching and learning processes.

**Managers at all levels**
Managers need to use teamwork to achieve their objectives and empower staff and learners to take charge of their own efforts to improve learners' chance of success.

**services we offer**

For governors and members of supervisory boards
- **1-day workshops** to disseminate best practice and maintain the focus on raising learner achievement.

For curriculum leaders and training coordinators
- **development modules** on teams and team leadership to improve outcomes for learners
- **continuing support** in carrying out your action plan after the training
- **a support network** for the exchange of ideas.

For all staff
- **research into leadership issues and raising learner success**
- **research into the supervisory board’s role in raising standards**
- **free publications** including:
  - Governance today: rising to the challenge of raising quality and achievement
  - Leadership issues: raising achievement.
other RQA Programme strands

- Quality information and advice service for colleges
  - A front-line information, advice and support helpline for colleges, backed by packs on good practice and run for the RQA Programme by the Association of Colleges.
  - Contact Rosemary Clark
  - Helpline 020 7827 4611

- Information and advice for work-based learning
  - A front-line information, advice and support helpline for work-based learning providers, backed by packs on good practice and run for the RQA Programme by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion.
  - Contact James Holyfield
  - Helpline 020 7840 8346

- Benchmarking and information
  - Help for managers to benchmark activities, improve processes and make better use of their own data.
  - Contact Jane Owen
  - Tel 020 7297 9083

- Development projects
  - College and work-based learning providers’ projects on strategies to improve retention and achievement.
  - Contact Vikki Smith
  - Tel 020 7297 9091

- Leadership for achievement
  - Help for governors and boards, training managers and team leaders to improve learners’ achievement and the quality of provision.
  - Contact John Thompson
  - Tel 020 7297 9085

- Sharing effective practice
  - Regional practitioner networks and partnership activities to develop and promote good practice in cross-college and curriculum areas.
  - Contact Muriel Green
  - Tel 0115 929 9097

contacts

- Quality improvement team
  - Regional networks and onsite support for providers on developing and implementing quality improvements
  - Contact Linda Bye
  - Tel 020 7297 9078
  - lbye@LSDA.org.uk

- Quality networks
  - Contact Phil Cox
  - Tel 020 7297 9079
  - pcox@LSDA.org.uk

- For more information about the RQA Programme please visit www.rqa.org.uk

The RQA Programme is funded by a grant to the Learning and Skills Development Agency from the Learning and Skills Council.
Regional networks and onsite support for providers to develop and implement quality improvements

Who are QIT consultants?
Our expert consultants have been through rigorous selection and training. They have all worked in the sector, and are experienced in colleges and/or work-based learning. They are familiar with the issues of large, complex organisations, as well as those facing small businesses. They work individually with a provider or as part of a team.

What QIT offers
Providers are entitled to free support from a consultant. This might include:
- a first visit to assess needs
- a further visit to help with the development plan and/or self-assessment, support for the implementation and delivery of plans.

Further support may be charged at a subsidised rate.

Extended support for longer term change programmes can effect improvements in leadership and management and a shift in culture, and is offered to some providers with matched funding.

Work-based learning provider workshops
Regular workshops are held on self-assessment and development planning.

quality networks
The quality networks are events for colleges and work-based learning providers held three times a year in nine regions.
Programmes are shaped by members and planned in liaison with local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs). Members can also network through e-mail groups.

Quality forums are for quality managers in colleges.

Quality support networks are for work-based learning providers.

They both help providers:
- develop ‘learner-centred’ approaches to quality improvement
- respond to LSC quality improvement strategies
- address the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework.

Regional networks and onsite support for providers to develop and implement quality improvements

what we do

quality improvement team
The quality improvement team (QIT) supports providers through subsidised onsite consultancy to:
- carry out rigorous self-assessment
- produce effective action and development plans
- implement the planned actions
- monitor and confirm progress
- evaluate and review effectiveness
- make improvements to teaching, learning and support processes
- improve quality systems, managing staff, management information systems, finance and governance.

quality improvement raising quality and achievement programme
other RQA Programme strands

quality improvement
Regional networks and onsite support for providers on developing and implementing quality improvements. Contact Linda Bye Tel 020 7297 9078

benchmarking and information
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contacts
quality information and advice service for colleges
A front-line information, advice and support helpline for colleges, backed by packs on good practice and run for the RQA Programme by the Association of Colleges
Contact Rosemary Clark or Maggie Scott Helpline 020 7827 4611 qualityadvice@aoc.co.uk

information and advice for work-based learning
A front-line information, advice and support helpline for work-based learning providers, backed by packs on good practice and run for the RQA Programme by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion
Contact James Holyfield Helpline 020 7840 8346 enquiries@qualitywbl.org.uk

adult and community learning quality support programme
Contact David Ewens Learning and Skills Development Agency Tel 020 7297 9075 dewens@LSDA.org.uk

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The RQA Programme is funded by a grant to the Learning and Skills Development Agency from the Learning and Skills Council
One-to-one quality information, advice and support for colleges and work-based learning providers to improve the quality of provision.

**what we do**

**quality information and advice service for colleges**
This service for colleges is operated by the Association of Colleges (AoC) for the Raising Quality and Achievement (RQA) Programme. The quality information and advice service for colleges supports colleges in their drive to improve students’ achievement and the quality of provision.

The AoC dedicated rapid-response helpline is staffed Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

Tel 020 7827 4611
qualityadvice@aoc.co.uk

**information and advice for work-based learning**
This service is run for the RQA Programme by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion with the Association of Learning Providers.

Information and advice for work-based learning helps Learning and Skills Council-funded work-based learning providers – whether they are public, private or voluntary sector. Staff at any level are welcome to call.

The work-based learning helpline is open Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.
Tel 020 7840 8346
enquiries@qualitywbl.org.uk

**both services offer**
A confidential information and advice service including:
- a telephone helpline
- e-mail enquiry service
- paper-based materials
- quality information packs
- examples of policy and practice.

Ring the helplines for advice on any matter relating to raising standards:
- improving learners’ achievement and the quality of provision
- information on inspection or LSC quality requirements
- referral to other colleges or providers for good practice
- referral, where appropriate, to the RQA Programme’s specialist quality improvement team
- referral to other strands of the RQA Programme.
### Contacts

**Sharing Effective Practice**
- **Regional practitioner networks and partnership activities to develop and promote good practice in cross-college and curriculum areas**
  - Contact: Muriel Green
  - Tel: 0115 929 9097
  - Email: mgreen@LSDA.org.uk

**Equality and Diversity Networks**
- **Contact:** Permjeet Panesar
  - Tel: 020 7297 9064
  - Email: ppanesar@LSDA.org.uk

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### Other RQA Programme Strands

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Sharing effective practice helps to secure improvements in teaching and learning

what we do

effective practice networks

Effective practice networks provide policy updates, share effective practice and build capacity through members’ development activities. Four networks meet three times a year in different regions across the country:

- student guidance
- trainee support
- tutoring
- equality and diversity.

Between meetings members can network through e-mail groups.

process improvement

Process improvement uses quality improvement tools and techniques to help providers analyse specific educational processes. Examples of effective practice also help pinpoint where change is needed and inform development plans.

Leading-edge providers and individual consultants give support through one-to-one advice and good practice seminars.

Themes include:
- using data to improve the performance of individual learners
- using teacher/trainer feedback and review and SMART targets to improve individual learning
- using observation of effective practice to improve learning and teaching across the organisation.

training staff trainers

Training staff trainers through residential programmes enables key college managers to use Raising Quality and Achievement (RQA) Programme multimedia resources to improve teaching and tutoring:

- improving differentiation in classroom practice
- learning mathematics through discussion and reflection
- using one-to-one tutorials to support individual learning.

multimedia resources

New multimedia resources will be developed to help providers challenge assumptions and develop new thinking to improve practice in:

- learner-centred initial assessment
- observation in different learning contexts.

Case studies and training materials will be published and will also be shared through quality forums, the RQA Programme website (www.rqa.org.uk), national conferences and networks.

sharing effective practice

raising quality and achievement programme

sharing effective practice

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