

Improving working arrangements with key national agencies

Guide to collaborative working

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IAG Partnerships have come a long way in developing inter-provider working arrangements at a local level however for many Partnerships, locally represented national bodies are not a common feature of these arrangements. The benefits of local-national collaborations go beyond cost-effectiveness and show real gains in embedding IAG into a wider range of locally delivered programmes, opening up access to more clients and providing them with seamless IAG services.

Summary

This report offers guidance to information advice and guidance (IAG) Partnership managers and coordinators and their strategic partners. It aims to lay the foundations for the development of efficient local IAG provision to adults through successful collaboration between local providers and national agencies. The report is based on a study commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and conducted by HOST Policy Research. It focuses on 10 principles drawn from case studies in which productive local-national links have been set up with five national agencies: the Ufi and **learn**direct; Connexions Partnerships; Jobcentre Plus; Business Links; and the National Probation Service.

This report is of interest to managers and coordinators of IAG Partnerships, IAG managers in local LSCs, and strategic partners.

Contents (by paragraph number)

Section 1: Introduction	1	Section 5: Collaboration and Capacity Building	46
Who are the National Agencies?	3	Principle 6: Promote Local-National Collaborations to Make them Visible to Users and Front-line Staff	48
Why Forge Local-National Information, Advice and Guidance Links?	5	Case study 7	51
Why Local Guidance?	8	Principle 7: Develop Collaborative Arrangements which Can Extend Access and Range of Services	52
So What is Good Practice?	11	Case study 8	55
Section 2: Using this Guidance	13	Case study 9	56
Is this Guidance for You?	15	Principle 8: Build Staff Awareness and Engagement in Collaborative Processes, and their Contribution, at the Front-end of Delivery	57
How Can this Guidance Help You?	17	Case study 10	59
What is the Focus of this Guidance?	19	Case study 11	60
How Should You Use this Guidance?	20	Principle 9: Build Stronger Local Coherence and Practitioner Standards Through Emphasising Joint Training and Development	61
Section 3: Towards National Integration	23	Case study 12	63
Principle 1: Develop Clear Local Expectations to Support Local-National Agreements and to Monitor their Implementation	24	Case study 13	64
Case study 1	26	Section 6: Learning from Experience	65
Principle 2: Promote at Local Level the Importance of Local-National Liaison and Joint Development, and Encourage Local Senior Management Commitment to Implementing Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership Arrangements	27	Principle 10: Learn from Experience by Systematic Monitoring and Evaluation	66
Case study 2	30	Case Study 14	70
Section 4: Developing Local-National Coherence	31	Section 7: Next Steps	71
Principle 3: Ensure Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership Management is Coherent with Other Locally Implemented National Structures	32	Top-down or Bottom-up?	72
Case study 3	35	What Are the Next Steps?	74
Principle 4: Make Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership Development Among National Agencies at Local Level a Distinct – and Distinctive – Responsibility for Specific Staff	36	Annexes:	
Case study 4	39	A Some Sources of Further Help	
Principle 5: Identify the Scope for Local Collaborations with National Bodies which Help Meet Common Objectives	40	B Jargon Buster	
Case study 5	44	C The Case Studies in Summary	
Case study 6	45		

Section 1: Introduction

- 1 The launch of the Quality Development Fund (QDF) in summer 2002 has seen a variety of projects set up to improve working arrangements in local provision of information, advice and guidance (IAG) to adults. This is against a background in which some local authorities or vocational education and training (VET) coordinating agencies have shown long-established commitment to IAG coordination, but too often this has not been the case. The legacy inherited by many IAG Partnerships – and the reason for their formation – has too often been fragmentation of provision, competitiveness between some providers, inconsistent standards in delivery and access, and some critical gaps in provision.
- 2 Tackling these issues is at the heart of what policy-makers hope and expect of IAG Partnerships. This policy continues to evolve, and stronger join-up between locally derived support and services and local-level programmes implemented by national agencies is seen as a cornerstone to getting to grips with these issues. This guidance – and the research on which it was based (Improving Working Arrangements with Key National Agencies, D J Parsons, J Barry and S Bysshe, LSC, 2003) – stems from those concerns. Its aim is to provide a starting point for all IAG Partnerships to look at what might be achieved and to develop some of the foundations needed for bridging the gap between local and national delivery in these areas.

Who are the National Agencies?

- 3 This guidance is concerned with local links with agencies operating under nationally determined structures for service delivery, in particular with the following five national agencies:
 - > Ufi and **learnirect**;
 - > Connexions Partnerships;
 - > Jobcentre Plus;
 - > Business Link; and
 - > the National Probation Service.
- 4 These are referred to in this guidance as the 'five national agencies'. Each has some IAG or related services. A distinction is made between the five national agencies and individual IAG Partnerships, the latter being characterised by local autonomy and governance. Other agencies might also be added to the list, but the five national agencies referred to here are those with which IAG Partnerships are seeking to build more active working arrangements.

Why Forge Local–National Information, Advice and Guidance Links?

- 5 IAG Partnerships have come a long way in developing inter-provider working arrangements at local level. Many now have wide and systematic communication arrangements across diverse providers. Most have jointly developed and agreed protocols for referrals, data sharing or similar working arrangements to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure individuals are not lost in the complex system.
- 6 For many IAG Partnerships, locally represented national bodies are not a common feature of these arrangements. The working arrangements that do exist at this level are more likely to be immature, inconsistently supported or clash with other priorities in these bodies. The research shows that where links have been forged they usually accommodate at most one or two of these bodies but often with substantial gains, including:
 - > sharing of premises and facilities for better IAG coordination and delivery – including common development of outreach and other 'new' services;

- > accessing other sources of collaboration funding for piloting new local initiatives and developing IAG capacity;
 - > joint marketing to open up IAG services to more clients, or to raise awareness in hard-to-reach groups in the community;
 - > sharing of client information to support IAG follow-up and aftercare for intensive needs clients;
 - > cross-agency integration of IAG activities following a wider range of local expertise into 'national' programmes;
 - > greater consistency in IAG services and standards – including 'national' agencies working towards the **matrix** Standard for information, advice and guidance services; and
 - > joint training and sharing of good practice to update and continuously improve practitioner skills and knowledge.
- 7 The benefits of local–national collaborations go beyond cost-effectiveness and show real gains in embedding IAG into a wider range of locally delivered programmes, opening up access to more clients and providing them with seamless IAG services.

Why Local Guidance?

- 8 Local–national links in IAG are best built from the 'bottom up'. This guidance draws together some of the lessons that can be learnt from successful collaborations. It is set out as a series of working principles, illustrated by examples of the collaborations that can take place and how particular benefits can emerge.
- 9 This is not to neglect the need for parallel activity at national level to encourage and support these national bodies in local IAG collaborations. The policy-making bodies for each of the five national agencies that are focused on here have all taken steps in this direction. For some, this top-down guidance is well advanced and will see local agencies more interested – and able – to form these links.

- 10 The focus of this 'local' guidance is to complement these top-down steps. It does not aim to be prescriptive. The contexts in which IAG Partnerships, and their management arrangements, work are very diverse, and a step-by-step guidance approach would not fit many IAG Partnerships very well. To support local adaptation, this guidance aims to draw together the common messages – 10 key principles – of how to build the necessary foundations.

So What is Good Practice?

- 11 Good practice is what is currently serving IAG Partnerships – and their various local stakeholders – well. There is no universal approach to what works. Each of the national agencies looked at has their own focus, needs and opportunities relating to IAG. Many have local management arrangements, which means that the motivation and experience of local managers may be as much a driving force in building collaborations as guidance from central policy-makers.
- 12 For the purposes of this guidance, good practice is any locally developed collaboration in building and sustaining local–national IAG working arrangements. Some of the experience we have been able to draw on is at very early stages of development, while some is more mature – or has emerged from earlier pre-IAG Partnership collaborations. Much of this so far is small-scale, but a few collaborations have developed to the point where many hundreds of individuals or employers are being supported. The common link in all of these is that working arrangements are being put in place, and these are transferable to other localities.

Section 2: Using this Guidance

- 13 This guidance is concerned with helping IAG Partnership managers and coordinators, and their partners, to look again at local coordination. It sets out a range of experience on local–national arrangements that are tried and tested, and starting to serve some IAG Partnerships well.
- 14 This is drawn together as 10 foundation principles from the case study research. These principles set out the processes and ways of working that are needed to start to define the scope for local–national working arrangements and to make them work. They do not provide ready-made solutions but provide the essential foundations for you to develop arrangements which fit local needs and circumstances.

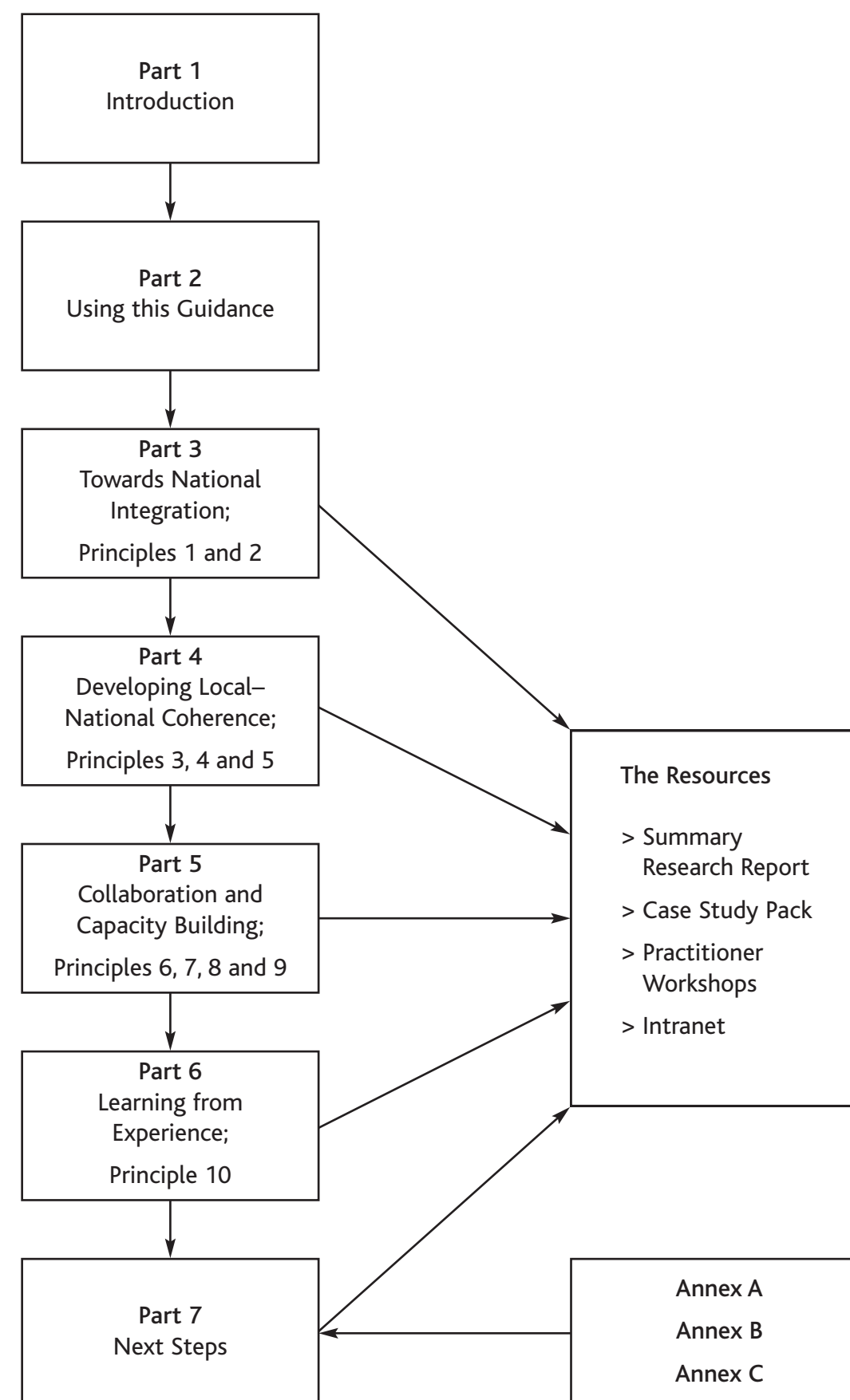
Is this Guidance for You?

- 15 This guidance has been prepared mainly with IAG Partnerships in mind, but it has been developed so that it can be shared with strategic partners. Users will include those with a strategic role in developing IAG locally, as well as others with a largely operational interest in building capacity and coherence. Users might include:
- > IAG Partnership managers and senior managers in lead bodies;
 - > IAG local area coordinators working on the ground to build quality provision;
 - > IAG contract managers in local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) – and others with a strategic interest in IAG; and
 - > managers in locally based national agencies and in local providers.
- 16 This is not an exclusive list. Innovative IAG Partnerships know that informed and committed partners are the glue that holds together their activities and plans. This guidance may have much to offer in helping to build stakeholder awareness of how to gain wider buy-in at local level from national agencies. IAG Partnership managers will best know their own localities and may be able to identify other stakeholders who could profit from such awareness.

How Can this Guidance Help You?

- 17 By working through the guidance, and the accompanying set of case studies, you will be able to:
- > take a timely look at the national agencies you are already working with – and how your arrangements compare to some of the early good practice profiled;
 - > look at your rationale for being involved with national agencies in development and delivery of IAG locally – and what are realistic expectations of change;
 - > look at the 10 principles and assess what barriers are holding you back from such developments – and look at how others have started to overcome these barriers;
 - > take a critical look at where you are in reference to these principles – and review what you need to put in place as a starting point for better collaboration; and
 - > develop a framework plan for mobilising the opportunities you identify.
- 18 This will help you to establish some of the foundations you will need to build local–national working arrangements in IAG, and to customise these to local needs. It will also give you confidence in knowing that these foundations are based on what has worked elsewhere. To do this, the guide is set out in seven complementary sections, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Structure of the guidance.



Top Tip

There are no rules about how best to harness the information in this guidance, but adapting its working principles to local circumstances will be very important. This will help position the guidance locally and ensure it builds awareness and is well received by the key stakeholders.

Cross-agency working arrangements in IAG are not about being nice to one another or filling one side of someone's agenda. They are about self-interest – you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours. This needs some mutual understanding and energy to find the right focus.

Managing Director, Coventry and Warwickshire Business Link

What is the Focus of this Guidance?

- 19 IAG Partnerships will already be well aware of the infrastructure of local IAG provision. They may know much less about what is – or could be – provided by some of the national agencies. This guidance aims to start to demystify collaborations and unlock their potential.
 - > It is concerned with sharing existing local experience of what is starting to work well elsewhere in building local–national working arrangements.
 - > It is based on innovations and better practice drawn from across England.
 - > It is about setting out working principles, which provide solid foundations for other IAG Partnerships starting to get to grips with this potential.
 - > It is about encouraging local adaptation and responsiveness.
 - > It is not about standardised approaches to collaborations, or being prescriptive on what IAG Partnerships should and should not do.
 - > It is not about specific strategies or priorities for local–national collaborations.
 - > It is not about setting standards for what is – and what is not – good practice.

How Should You Use this Guidance?

- 20 The guidance is a starting point only – but a vital one for IAG Partnerships to look afresh at what can realistically be achieved through harnessing the potential of locally based national agencies for IAG development and delivery. It is a 'do-it-yourself' document, which will help to draw out some of the principles that guide better practice. It keeps things simple by:
 - > looking at the 10 common principles for developing more effective local–national working arrangements – these can be used to work better with any of the five national agencies which are the focus of this guidance;
 - > providing snapshots of how these principles have been applied in some of the more forward-looking IAG Partnerships – these are drawn from the detailed case studies which back up this guidance (see Annex C); and
 - > setting out some 'top tips', which can be used to start to customise experience.
- 21 The aim is to provide solid foundations for IAG Partnerships to review what they are already doing and to find a focus for further improvement. It is a starting point for action – not an end point. Some IAG Partnerships will find they have already gone a long way to securing these foundations; others will find that they are further behind but improving or starting to improve. There is something for everyone here in establishing a solid platform for collaborations.
- 22 The guidance is only that – a guide for you and your colleagues or partners to what has started to work elsewhere. The circumstances of different IAG Partnerships are diverse, and the challenge is to find how you and others can add value to the principles in ways that are best fitted to your area.

Section 3: Towards National Integration

- 23 The five national agencies do not operate in isolation. They have their own goals and local plans to achieve them, their own challenges and priorities for performance, and their own expectations of quality and standards. Many of these will be shaped and conditioned to meet specific national requirements and targets through diverse guidance – which may or may not specifically set out what role is to be played by IAG within this. A starting point for building effective working arrangements with such bodies at local level is understanding this background and guidance, and how it is being interpreted locally. This calls for the need to:
 - > develop clear local expectations to support local–national agreements and to monitor their implementation; and
 - > promote at local level the importance of local–national liaison and joint development, and to encourage local senior management commitment to implementing IAG Partnership arrangements.

Principle 1: Develop Clear Local Expectations to Support Local–National Agreements and to Monitor their Implementation

- 24 This first principle calls for clear and practical local views on how IAG collaborations between local–national bodies are expected to support local programmes and delivery. The case studies show that IAG Partnerships and local providers can have considerable 'bottom-up' impact on forming such views. In doing so, they can show the scope and value in wider actions which better integrate IAG activities locally.
- 25 Some of the practical steps to be taken by IAG Partnerships include:

- > being more aware of the challenges and priorities for development among locally represented national bodies, and their performance goals and expectations, programmes, and targets;
- > understanding the national frameworks and priorities within which these bodies need to operate;
- > working proactively with these bodies at local level in order to explore IAG relationships – potential and actual – which can add value to these goals and core activities;
- > establishing small-scale pilot collaboration activities to help local managers demonstrate how such collaborations can add value to their core objectives; and
- > identifying with these agencies how IAG collaborations or innovations might also play a role in addressing future development needs – and the available channels for resourcing these.

Case study 1

- 26 Jobcentre Plus has established a 'Jobcentre Plus and Learning and Skills Council IAG Framework' at national level. This leaves much to the local discretion of district managers in pursuing active collaborations, such as co-hosting IAG sessions within Jobcentres or introducing joint staff-development activities. Some IAG Partnerships have been able to tap this local autonomy – and the enthusiasm of specific district managers – to establish pilot arrangements which can help Jobcentre Plus explore the scope for worthwhile collaborations which complement mainstream activities. For example, in County Durham, considerable activity by the IAG Partnership Coordinators working with the Jobcentre Plus District Manager has seen a prototype protocol

developed, all Jobcentres briefed on IAG activities and support, an agreement on joint working for large-scale redundancies, two Jobcentre Plus-led Action Teams for Jobs pilots which work closely with IAG Partnership advisers, and referral arrangements and agreed visits to clients at a number of the Jobcentres. Progress could now stem from tapping the local autonomy of key managers in developing such arrangements where they are seen to be of value to core activities.

- > assessing the quality of membership – and contributions from these groups in terms of attendance, substitutions, inputs, and volunteering;
- > critically evaluating where your natural champions lie within these groups – and their roles and responsibilities within them;
- > evaluating the relationships between these individuals or groups and other stakeholders in the IAG Partnership – are there lessons to be drawn on who should be involved, and how?; and
- > where one or more national groups are not involved – or are only peripherally engaged – establish with appropriate senior managers the reasons for this, and work with other partners to change or challenge the situation.

29 In the end, the effective involvement of national agencies locally in IAG Partnerships is a matter of understanding, leadership and prioritisation – all factors that can be influenced at local level.

Case study 2

30 The Jobcentre Plus District Managers in the old Employment Service areas of Norfolk and Plymouth had been active contributors to the IAG Partnership since start-up. Both were known to be keen to develop the quality of support and standards of staff and more generally promote partnership working. In a collaboration with the respective IAG Partnership Managers and local LSC contract managers, this became the basis of the Guidance Council Quality Standards and **matrix** Standard projects in Jobcentre Plus in these two areas. The District Managers also developed these activities to act as a pilot for wider implementation – and the results are currently being reviewed at national level.

Principle 2: Promote at Local Level the Importance of Local–National Liaison and Joint Development, and Encourage Local Senior Management Commitment to Implementing Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership Arrangements

- 27 This principle goes hand-in-hand with the first. It may seem remote to some IAG Partnerships, which may feel disconnected from some of the local offices of the five national agencies in their region. Others may see this as a 'chicken and egg' situation, uncertain of what should come first. The case studies suggest that there is no right answer. However, they also show that much can be done at local level, not only in developing these links and building management commitment to their 'value-added' capacity, but also in harvesting this experience to provide evidence of the scope for wider action.
- 28 What is done locally will depend on the maturity of any links with the national agencies, but this might involve:
- > reviewing membership of executive management or key task groups in the IAG Partnership to look at who is missing from the national agencies;

Top Tip

Understanding the national expectations and context of these agencies can help you to find appropriate leverage or pressure points. If there is no national IAG guidance on which you can draw, each of the agencies will have other targets or priorities to which coherent and high-quality IAG will contribute.

Coherence between local and national IAG players is sometimes seen as a matter of goodwill. It is not. It's about recognising common ground and needs, and developing collaborations which do something better about it. This is not gifted, it is crafted.

Manager, NOW, Lancashire IAG Partnership

Section 4: Developing Local–National Coherence

- 31 The experience of the case study organisations shows that there is nothing magical about building coherence. Many of the local–national collaborations which underpin this guidance have been developed from earlier relationships or by opportunism to support working arrangements which:
- > ensure IAG Partnership management is coherent with other locally implemented national structures;
 - > make IAG Partnership development among national agencies at local level a distinct – and distinctive – responsibility for specific staff; and
 - > identify the scope for local collaborations with national bodies which help in meeting common objectives.

Principle 3: Ensure Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership Management is Coherent with Other Locally Implemented National Structures

- 32 There are many cross-agency strategic and liaison groups aimed at local integration of post-16 learning development and related activities. All of the five national agencies will be involved in some, and perhaps all, of these and some may be cautious about adding a further tier to these arrangements through direct involvement in the IAG Partnership.
- 33 Many IAG Partnership managers and coordinators report that although most or all of these agencies are represented on IAG Partnership management groups, some are only occasional contributors. Among the case study IAG Partnerships, it was clear that effective working arrangements with national bodies drew on robust participation. Representation itself does not guarantee

coherence. These IAG Partnerships were prepared to adapt the form of participation to the circumstances of the agencies. This included:

- > setting up alternative forms of representation that operated through special interest groups within the IAG Partnership management body – often sub-groups in areas such as workforce development or offenders likely to be seen as directly relevant to agencies such as Business Link and the National Probation Service;
- > establishing special project or task groups – often set up for a specific time period and activity, and where national agencies saw a particular focus and not an open-ended commitment to representation; and
- > building in subsidiary but systematic liaison arrangements with agencies unable or reluctant to be formally involved at the full IAG Partnership level.

34 This flexibility in involving different agencies below management group level has worked very well for some IAG Partnerships. Some, however, have seen greater value in setting up supernumerary groups which focus wholly on strategic IAG development and which can be seen as more relevant to national agencies.

Case study 3

35 The Sheffield IAG Partnership, which is branded as Gateways to Learning, has seen a Strategic IAG Forum as the best way to draw together provider representation with other strategic groups such as the Learning Partnership (Sheffield Futures) and locally based national agencies. The group was set up in 2002 and has a specific focus on IAG strategic development and links across agencies – previously seen as a weakness in the area. In

addition to major providers and local development agencies, it has been successful in drawing in the national offices of the Ufi and **learnirect**, Connexions, Jobcentre Plus, Business Link and also the regional office of the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

Principle 4: Make Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership Development Among National Agencies at Local Level a Distinct – and Distinctive – Responsibility for Specific Staff

- 36 IAG Partnerships clearly have it in their brief to engage other agencies. The counterpart to this is that those agencies need to allocate specific roles and responsibilities for this among their staff, and task individuals to get involved. This is not a requirement on most of the national agencies and requires discretionary activities by these bodies.
- 37 Among the case studies, some IAG Partnerships have gone to considerable lengths to encourage specific national agencies to do this. These include:
- > establishing joint development projects which require collaborating agencies to appoint a project manager, who may then be co-opted to other IAG Partnership activities;
 - > working through other cross-agency forums to identify agency contacts in those groups and forging proactive links with those individuals; and
 - > working with strategic partners such as the local LSC already involved in the IAG Partnership, to encourage specific agencies to task individuals with IAG liaison or other responsibilities.
- 38 These are seen as a necessary starting point for building more broad-based involvement and representation.

Case study 4

- 39 In West Norfolk, a Jobcentre Plus District Coordinator was appointed by the District Manager to act as project manager on work to implement the Guidance Council Quality Standards (GCQS) and the **matrix** Standard for information advice and guidance (the **matrix** Standard). This role was extended to cover other IAG liaison work, and has proven an important focus for further collaboration with Jobcentre Plus.

Principle 5: Identify the Scope for Local Collaborations with National Bodies which Help Meet Common Objectives

- 40 Research shows that at local level, national agencies may see little or no scope for IAG to contribute to their core activities. It also shows that this attitude often stems from little or no top-down guidance to these agencies, and from misunderstandings about the nature of IAG and the work of IAG Partnerships. As a result, the potential synergies between 'local' and 'national' objectives are often poorly understood.
- 41 This affects some IAG Partnerships much more than others, but the case studies show that some have been able to work with these agencies to identify common objectives and draw them into collaborations through:
- > encouraging informal discussions between lead IAG Partnership members, or key stakeholders, to explore common ground with some of these agencies;
 - > co-opting at local level a manager(s) from particular national agencies into a working or task group as a form of action learning to better understand respective roles and responsibilities; and
 - > setting up individual discussions with a targeted agency manager(s), or at IAG Partnership level to jointly identify related organisation goals, or development issues, and the scope for collaboration.
- 42 The pace of the first two of these can be slow, but in each case the outcome is a better understanding of the synergies between the aims of different organisations, and awareness of how practical collaborations can help meet common objectives.
- 43 The five national agencies have considerable autonomy in developing self-interest collaborations locally. Developing this awareness can provide the motivation to start to explore this with IAG Partnerships.

Case study 5

- 44 As a result of discussions within the IAG Partnership, the Executive Director of Coventry and Warwickshire Business Link has worked closely with the IAG Partnership manager, the local Chamber of Commerce and the local LSC to look at where IAG provision can support their own goals in supporting small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in workforce development. Considerable common ground has been found, and Business Link now leads on a cross-area programme of collaborations between their personal advisers and selected IAG providers to support workplace basic skills development and wider business needs training in SMEs. This has seen a wide range of firms supported, and individual employees drawn into vocational education and training. It has also seen practical briefing and referral processes put in place, provider capabilities developed, and stronger understanding in the advisory team about how IAG interventions add value to SMEs. A knock-on benefit is that Business Link will also shortly be making a commitment to the **matrix** Standard. The initiative is now developing under its own steam, largely through mainstream funding in Business Link. It attracted wide national interest and is seen by some as a model for wider collaborations.

Case study 6

- 45 In the West Of England, Connexions, working with the IAG Partnership, has identified a joint strategic need to build the capacity of voluntary and community organisations in the area. This is seen as essential if they are to make respective progress in engaging disadvantaged young people and adults. A joint review and consultation targeted 20 voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) which might be eligible for Department for Education and Skills (DfES) funding for support towards the **matrix** Standard, and all subsequently received funding and support from Connexions and the IAG Partnership. The initiative has been seen to unlock the potential of these organisations as collaborators, and a range of adult IAG services (and related ones for 13–19-year-olds) are now franchised or co-delivered in the community through these bodies.

Top Tip

Understanding synergy is the key to building sustainable local–national working arrangements. This is best tackled by finding your natural allies in these agencies, and this means people and not posts. It is better to have a middle-level practitioner as an ally in one or more of these agencies, who can work with their senior managers to promote IAG collaborations internally, than a senior manager occasionally attending IAG Partnership meetings with little understanding or enthusiasm for change. Local networks among members are a good starting point to find such allies.

Success in IAG Partnership working is still seen by many in IAG as mystical... but there is no magic box of tricks. Most of it is just diligence in finding who you need to work with and then finding the doorways and how to open them. Luck may be involved but most good collaborations make their own.

IAG coordinator, Northumberland IAG Partnership

Section 5: Collaboration and Capacity Building

46 Working with locally represented national agencies must have a purpose. For most IAG Partnerships, this is about collaboration that can improve coherence across different services and service providers, and also extend access for clients. Principles 1 to 5 can open doors which may have seemed closed to you, but something more is needed to translate this into local actions which really do build capacity in IAG. This calls in particular for a need to:

- > promote local–national collaborations to make them visible to users and front-line staff;
- > develop collaborative arrangements which can extend access and range of services;
- > build staff awareness and engagement in collaborative processes, and their contribution, at the front-end of delivery; and
- > build stronger local coherence and practitioner standards through emphasising joint training and development.

47 The case studies show that it is putting these principles into action which has helped IAG Partnerships build on greater joint awareness or early co-operations with national agencies. For some, pilot activities or small-scale cooperative projects have now become mainstreamed into core services and programmes.

Principle 6: Promote Local–National Collaborations to Make them Visible to Users and Front-line Staff

48 In many of the case studies, success in local–national working arrangements has bred more success, but only where others recognise what has worked and why. To make collaborations work – and to build on even small-scale successes and working arrangements – the people who will be most involved in them need to understand what is going on and why. Collaborations which are not visible risk little or nothing being made of them.

49 Visibility is about promotion, and this may not come easily to IAG practitioners, who are often more concerned with 'getting on with it'. It may involve something as straightforward as demonstrating joint delivery on each other's premises but could go much further. Some of the ways this has been done in the case studies include:

- > producing summary papers of what has been done and what has been achieved, and using the local media and other networks to disseminate these;
- > using existing web sites – your own and/or those of partners – to feature successes and outcomes;
- > reducing successes to the lowest common denominator – profiles of particular participants and how they have benefited;
- > paying attention to dissemination inside the agencies involved – perhaps running joint briefing sessions for staff who may not have been involved; and
- > integrating 'results' and lessons into joint staff-training events and activities.

50 A lot of this is about basic communications, but also about celebrating successes – and spreading the message that cross-agency collaborations can and do work.

Case study 7

51 In Herefordshire and Worcestershire, work through the IAG Partnership to promote local collaborations in setting up community-based Partnership Information Points (PIPs) has resulted in spin-offs to locally based national agencies. These have been supported by an IAG Information Officer. The Connexions Partnership has seen these as a valuable model and is collaborating with the Information Officer to set up a number of joint (youth and adult) PIPs. The local Prison Service has also seen merit in these, and is also working with the IAG Partnership – with which it had very little past involvement – to set up and maintain a parallel service at Hewell Grange Prison.

Principle 7: Develop Collaborative Arrangements which Can Extend Access and Range of Services

52 The litmus test for any local–national IAG collaborations is that they are genuinely cooperative and build on respective activities to extend IAG provision to clients that action by individual providers might not reach. If they are not cooperative and additional they may prove difficult to sustain.

53 Everyone benefits from such collaborations – the participants, the partners and the community. They can be initiated multilaterally – involving various coordinating agencies – but are more likely to be bilateral arrangements linking the IAG

Partnership with specific national agencies. This may include joint working agreements on areas such as client referral or data sharing but, among the case studies, has also involved:

- > reviewing common-interest needs groups or localities for whom joint working might improve access or the range of IAG services;
- > establishing joint monitoring groups to review the practical working of protocols or working agreements;
- > identifying 'problem' groups or people which are jointly seen as hard to reach, and developing pilot or wider-scale activities to try new forms of delivery to them – sometimes risks which a single organisation is reluctant to take can be tackled by two or more working together; and
- > looking at proposed developments or forms of delivery which would benefit from collaboration between agencies – in design, development, delivery or promotion.

54 Research shows the preferred approach to joint working is through putting in place protocols or similar forms of agreement. However, these can be slow to take off and may continue to be held back by poor understanding of IAG by the staff involved. The case studies show that joint developments are more likely to be effective where they directly engage some staff in collaborative activities which are seen to be doing something new. These can be highly motivating to staff and can very quickly extend IAG provision.

Case study 8

55 NOW, the Lancashire IAG Partnership, was among the pioneers in working with the Ufi and **learnirect** to set up a local portal linked to the national learning database to extend information services to the community. The project was funded by the LSC's Local Initiative Fund (LIF) and involved collaboration between NOW, the local LSC and the Ufi and **learnirect**. In under four months of intensive joint development, a fully functioning portal was developed. This was accessed through the home page of a fully revamped NOW web site, and it built in new direct updating processes for local providers to ensure that the information accessed through the portal on the national database was up to date and accurate. The number of providers supplying data to the database has doubled, as has the number of learning options profiled, and local concerns about the accuracy of the national database have largely abated. The portal has acted as a model for developments now being pursued by other sub-regions.

Case study 9

56 In North Somerset – one of four network groups of the West of England IAG Partnership – discussions between the local IAG coordinator and Business Link in Somerset forged a collaboration between themselves and the county library service to reach micro and start-up businesses in remoter rural communities. Business Link had been concerned about how to reach such firms cost-effectively in a way which was also accessible to such firms. The IAG Partnership was also keen to work with Business Link to promote workforce development support and start-up guidance to rural communities. The collaboration – funded through the QDF – has seen a range of materials developed and a programme of community visits timed to coincide with the mobile library visits to villages. The service is at an early stage and is under review, but is already showing potential for roll-out to other rural communities in the IAG Partnership area.

Principle 8: Build Staff Awareness and Engagement in Collaborative Processes, and their Contribution, at the Front-end of Delivery

- 57 Collaboration between IAG Partnerships and specific national agencies does not take place in isolation. Consequently, IAG capacity building through local–national arrangements often needs to stress the importance of communications with practitioners beyond those directly involved in the activities to raise awareness of what is being done, why, the processes involved, and what services are provided or enhanced. Some of the case studies have found this to be a critical feature of success in developing the local–national working arrangements through:
- > tasking IAG coordinators or project-funded staff to disseminate summary materials or provide group briefings to other providers and stakeholders;
 - > making arrangements to harness existing internal staff communications arrangements, such as local intranets or staff newsletters, to promote activities;
 - > developing simple dissemination materials and distributing these through appropriate personal or electronic channels; and
 - > using existing networks or meetings to feature pre-project announcements of the scope of the collaborations and how individuals might be involved.
- 58 Some have also successfully used 'cascade' briefing arrangements – using existing team or staff meetings among providers to disseminate what is happening. However, although cost-effective, these can result in muddled or patchy communications unless the ground is very well prepared.

Case study 10

59 Go4, the IAG Partnership for Devon and Cornwall, has worked with Jobcentre Plus in Plymouth to pilot the **matrix** Standard among staff. A by-product of this collaboration, which has been heavily promoted among other IAG Partnership members, has been extended links between the six individual jobcentres and a range of community-based and other bodies. This has included extended work with the National Probation Service (NPS) on the rehabilitation of offenders, a joint forum being forged to provide front-line IAG assessments with refugees and asylum seekers in Jobcentres, and a new arrangement to enable a Jobcentre Plus adviser to work with offenders at Dartmoor Prison.

Case study 11

60 In developing its collaborative portal with the Ufi and **learnirect**, NOW, the Lancashire IAG Partnership, was heavily involved in promoting the forthcoming new arrangements to providers and stakeholders in the area. This involved developing a widely circulated leaflet about the new portal, who it was aimed at and how it could help. Also, in the latter stages of the project, the Contract Manager in NOW spent half her time in running a roadshow for practitioners across a wide range of local providers. This had the advantage of raising practitioners' awareness of the portal – and the need for more active involvement in updating by more providers – but also in harnessing their support as brokers of IAG. The roadshows were seen as essential to the early success of the portal – and had the knock-on benefit of greatly boosting the profile of the IAG Partnership, and providers' engagement in it.

Principle 9: Build Stronger Local Coherence and Practitioner Standards Through Emphasising Joint Training and Development

- 61 Joint training is one of the more common forms of collaboration developed through IAG Partnerships. Often the focus of this training is on local providers who are active members, but the same activities can add value to locally based national agencies who may be less engaged in the IAG Partnership. These organisations will have a range of in-service and professional development training, but IAG capability issues may rarely be tackled directly in these. Our case studies show Jobcentre Plus staff at the start of collaborations who were almost wholly unaware of what IAG was or how IAG Partnerships contributed, human resource development (HRD) advisers in Business Link who did not know IAG Partnerships existed, and NPS officers who were unaware that local providers also supported IAG in offender basic skills needs. They also show that joint training and development were valuable ways of starting to break down some of these awareness issues through:
- > IAG Partnership Managers developing specific joint training events to encourage involvement of specific national agencies (for example, IAG and workplace basic skills);
 - > coordinators promoting existing joint training activities directly to practitioners in locally based national agencies – often using other local networks;
 - > IAG Partnerships developing cross-agency briefing events on common interest developments (for example, the launch of the LSC's national workforce development strategy); and
 - > IAG Partnership brokering and support of organisations moving towards the **matrix** Standard.
- 62 The scope for this seems almost endless. The primary responsibility for staff development will rest with local and national agencies within IAG Partnerships, but the research shows that joint training across these organisational boundaries is a very effective way of building skills within the IAG Partnership.

Evaluation is an under-used tool. Too many people look at it as something that can hurt rather than help, but it's really the other way around. At best, most people in IAG pay lip service to it, but without it you are going to make the same mistakes over again.

Member of staff, IAG Partnership

Case study 12

63 The NPS Thames Valley has been an active member of the Oxfordshire IAG Partnership since its foundation but has more recently become extensively involved in joint training. This has evolved as a two-way activity. NPS trainers and senior staff have been working with the IAG Partnership to provide workshops on working with offenders and ex-offenders, on how the NPS operates, on effectiveness of rehabilitation, and on technical courses such as the use of psychometric testing by the NPS. This has provided the NPS with valuable feedback on perspectives and alternative forms of working for use in its Entry to Employment programme. More recently, the workshops have been organised through the IAG Partnership for NPS staff locally – to support their recent commitment to work towards the **matrix** Standard.

Case study 13

64 The MARTiN project in Devon and Cornwall – run through Go4 (the IAG Partnership for Devon and Cornwall) – has centred on Multi-Agency Reciprocal Training in Networks (MARTiN). Funded through the Quality Development Fund (QDF), it had a specific intention to use the opportunity created to draw in some of the locally based national agencies more closely to working with the IAG Partnership. One of the more successful training events has been coordinated with Jobcentre Plus and has involved managers of jobcentres in specific localities presenting a series of workshops to Go4 members about Jobcentre Plus services and future developments

Top Tip

The Business Link, National Probation Service or Jobcentre Plus in one area will share many characteristics with others. If an IAG working arrangement can work well for one, it can work as well in a different area. Where such activities are under-developed, the challenge is about recognising and unlocking this potential by using the principles to find what benefit joint working arrangements can bring, and to mobilise these.

Section 6: Learning from Experience

65 For many IAG Partnerships, there is much to be done – and achieved – in building stronger local–national working arrangements. This will take time and needs confidence to experiment, persevere and to learn from this experience. This guidance has focused on what can be learnt from others, but as opportunities and responses are developed there is much to be gained from the ability to:

- > learn from experience by systematic monitoring and evaluation.

Principle 10: Learn from Experience by Systematic Monitoring and Evaluation

66 Some may see this as self-evident, but evaluation and monitoring are very easily neglected in favour of more immediate priorities. Even among some of the more innovative IAG Partnerships, this can be the weakest part of local–national working arrangements and initiatives.

67 The starting point for many local–national collaborations will often be informal arrangements, perhaps testing the ground for later activity. Limited resources – or natural caution about doing new things (or old things in a different way) – may mean that formal evaluation or monitoring within this is neglected or is slow to develop. This can result in little or no learning from what has been done – and will slow down any later embedding of the lessons in wider IAG practice.

68 Evaluation and monitoring are crucial if partners are to learn from what has worked well – and what can be improved on. They are tools of innovation – and even experimental or small-scale collaborations are likely to be poorly crafted unless they build in:

- > the agreement of formal objectives for the working arrangements – what it is hoped will be achieved, and how this is expected to add value to current practice;
- > the establishment of a few simple measures of success or targets linked to these objectives – and a sensible timetable for achieving these. These measures can be small-scale, but do need to be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed;
- > the setting out of a parallel process – preferably independent from those involved at the front-end of the new arrangements – for tracking progress and assessing its impact against the agreed measures; and
- > the agreement of a joint arrangement for reviewing this evidence and for taking it forward.

What Are the Next Steps?

- 74 This is a starter pack, not a manual. The 10 principles (and case study experience) need to be applied to local needs and circumstances to forge the necessary links. There is no right or wrong way to do this, but there are some ways to move forward.
- > Share this guidance with close colleagues and key partners. You may need to pick your collaborators well in this – and remember that the principles call for both strategic and operational collaborations.
 - > Look at the principles as a package. Action against each is interdependent. What is needed is not cherry-picking the principles, but a critical look at the virtuous circle of all the principles, and where the IAG Partnerships – and the providers that make it up – are in relation to this.
 - > At the same time, start to work with the accompanying case study pack. A good starting point here is for affinity – which of these examples ring bells in relation to your locality? Many may not be relevant to local circumstances, but some will be, and there is much more in these case studies than has been touched on in this guidance.
 - > When you have consulted close colleagues, and reviewed the case studies, put together a short assessment of the state of play across the IAG Partnership against these 10 principles. This will identify where the main gaps are in working arrangements with the five national agencies.
 - > Look at this assessment with the contract manager in the local LSC and modify the assessment as needed to establish priorities for action, agree contacts and approach, and review any resource or development implications.
 - > Test this revised assessment on your immediate colleagues and key partners, and jointly explore further priorities (and opportunities) for starting to fill some of the gaps against your existing IAG Partnership plans.

> This may be the time to introduce this assessment – and the guidance – to the full IAG Partnership. The focus will be the assessment and how to move forward, and not the guidance itself. The aim should be to agree an action plan for taking this forward – working with the local LSC contract manager to agree priorities and development implications. You may be able to secure additional resources to support some of this through initiative or development funds, or harness other activity through European Social Fund (ESF) or other project funding, but if not much can be started using (or prioritising) existing resources among partners.

- 75 Whether you are building on existing collaborations or starting afresh, this local assessment, combined with the example case studies, will provide a starting point for discussions with individual national bodies. The benefits set out at the start of this guidance, and found in the case studies, will provide a cutting edge to the discussions.
- 76 There is nothing here that is meant to be prescriptive. When you get this far, you will have already started a momentum of local activity. This may well be the point where you can throw away this guidance – it is after all a starting point, and you may soon move well beyond the common development principles. However, you may also find value in periodically returning to this guidance to look for missed opportunities.

Annex:

Annex A: Some Sources of Further Help

- 77 The aim is for this guidance document to be self-contained, but readers exploring how best to put local–national arrangements in place, or to improve those already in place, may also like to look at some of the following sources.
- > **Improving Working Arrangements with Key National Agencies**.,: the research that underpinned this guidance is separately available from the LSC IAG team (see Annex B), or through your local LSC IAG Contract Manager.
 - > **Improving Local–National Information Advice and Guidance Working Arrangements: Case studies of good practice and innovation**: a set of the 17 case study mini-reports is also available to all local LSCs and IAG Partnerships. If you have not already seen a copy, please contact your local LSC IAG Contract Manager. These case studies were recorded between November 2002 and February 2003, and by the time you see them many will have moved on or have developed further. Contact details for each case study are provided in Annex C.
- 78 In addition to these specific sources of information you might also like to look at the web sites for each of the following national agencies.
- > Connexions (CSNU) – www.connexions.gov.uk
 - > Jobcentre Plus – www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
 - > National Probation Service – www.london-probation.org.uk
 - > Small Business Service – www.sbs.gov.uk
 - > the Ufi – www.ufilttd.co.uk
 - > **learndirect** – www.learndirect.co.uk.
- 79 These will provide valuable background on roles and responsibilities, contacts and organisation – although there is likely to be limited specific information on IAG.

Annex B: Jargon Buster

Business Link

The network of sub-regional agencies who provide advice and guidance to business start-up and established smaller firms looking to develop their products or services or improve their performance. Business Link also provide some workforce development services to small businesses under contract to the LSC.

Connexions

The national programme and brand which develops and provides multi-issue IAG services to 13–19-year-olds (and to some others with special needs). Connexions is managed at local level through 47 quasi-autonomous and self-governing Partnerships, whose boundaries match those of local LSCs.

Connexions Service National Unit (CSNU)

The national unit responsible for funding and management of Connexions Partnerships.

Department for Education and Skills (DfES)

The lead government department in IAG for adults and young people.

Employment Service

The former executive agency with the DfES group, responsible for publicly funded job-brokerage and the national network of jobcentres. This is now run through the wide remit of Jobcentre Plus.

The five national agencies

The Ufi and **learndirect**; Connexions Partnerships; Jobcentre Plus; Business Links; and the National Probation Service.

HOST Policy Research

The independent research and consulting group contracted by the LSC to undertake research and develop this guidance.

Human Resource Development (HRD) Advisers

Sometimes called workforce development advisers, these are the main point of Business Link contact on employment and VET issues for SMEs.

Information Advice and Guidance (IAG)

In this guidance, IAG refers only to services for adults.

Jobcentre Plus

The successor executive agency to the Employment Service and now reporting to the Department for Work and Pensions.

Local Initiative Fund (LIF)

Funding managed by local LSCs and providing a development funding route for local innovations aimed at improving performance, progression and responsiveness of post-16 learning.

Learning and Skills Council (LSC) National Office

The IAG unit based at LSC national office supports national developments in IAG. The LSC is the funding agency for non-higher-education post-16 learning and skills in England. It operates through a network of 47 local LSCs.

local LSC

A local office of the Learning and Skills Council.

National Probation Service (NPS)

The service set up in April 2002 which drew together the former locally managed Probation Services into a national network run through the National Probation Directorate of the Home Office.

Quality Development Fund (QDF)

The LSC's QDF launched over 90 locally based IAG development projects in summer 2002, and five parallel national QDF projects. This guidance and other associated documents also derive from the QDF.

Small Business Service (SBS)

The Department of Trade and Industry unit responsible for the funding and direction of Business Links.

Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Conventionally defined as those with fewer than 250 employees within a single business enterprise.

Ufi and learndirect

These together make up the executive arm, funded at present through the DfES and responsible for managing and developing all Ufi activities in the UK, including the national learning helpline.

VCOs

Voluntary and community organisations.

VET

Vocational education and training (post-16).

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 1: Selected IAG innovations in building working arrangements with national bodies.

Sub-region	Lead organisation and funding	Innovation(s) in IAG working arrangements	Local–national collaboration
Berkshire Berkshire IAG Partnership Tel: 01635 41722	CfBT (IAG Partnership) Central funds plus ESF and QDF	Developing links with Business Link Berkshire and Wiltshire Development of joint web site Building capacity among IAG	Multi-agency National bodies, particularly Jobcentre Plus and Business Link
Birmingham Birmingham IAG Partnership Tel: 0121 248 8089	Birmingham and Solihull IAG Partnership Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry Birmingham Business Link	Development of a referral hub for SMEs and micro-businesses Mirrors the Learning Shop arrangements in the area for individuals	Planning and provision of training and development for Business Link staff to make effective IAG referrals
County Durham Co. Durham IAG Partnership Tel: 0191 383 1666	County Durham Strategic Lifelong Learning Partnership Miscellaneous funding, but Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) 5 and ESF Objective 2 most important	IAG video-conferencing in community and other venues Focus on 19 deprived wards Multi-agency locations (for example, libraries, Connexions head office, Citizens Advice Bureaux, District Council Offices, Welfare Rights Offices, Jobcentres)	Multi-agency collaboration National bodies include Connexions, NPS and Jobcentre Plus
Coventry and Warwickshire Coventry and Warwickshire IAG Partnership Tel: 024 7683 1764	Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Miscellaneous project funding	Integrated IAG reviews with SMEs Systematic referral procedures and follow-up	IAG Partnership–Business Link lead Multi-provider collaboration
Derbyshire Derbyshire IAG Partnership Tel: 01773 746174	NPS working with IAG Partnership in Derbyshire	IAG Partnership involved in training Probation Service Advisers in IAG	Local initiative with no national involvement

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 1: Selected IAG innovations in building working arrangements with national bodies (continued).

Sub-region	Lead organisation and funding	Innovation(s) in IAG working arrangements	Local–national collaboration
Gloucester Gloucester IAG Partnership Tel: 01452 425903	Business Link Gloucestershire Gloucestershire Opportunities (GO) IAG Partnership LSC Gloucestershire LIF	Development of a national vocational qualification (NVQ) advisory service aimed at SMEs and micro-businesses Business Link staff working with others as NVQ Advisers	Close cooperation between local LSC, Business Link and IAG Partnership Training of delivery team Low national involvement
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Herefordshire and Worcestershire IAG Partnership Tel: 01905 765413	IAG Partnership IAG Partnership funds and partner self-funding	IAG Partnership Information Points (PIPs) 40 PIPs (some peripatetic) in miscellaneous voluntary and community settings, including 10 pubs Mix of hard-copy sources, promotion, software and self-help Supporting training for front-line location staff – IAG intermediaries	Multi-agency involvement National bodies include learndirect (larger centres), the Prison Service, Connexions and Jobcentre Plus Some joint-branded PIPs
Lancashire Lancashire IAG Partnership Tel: 01772 205400	NOW (IAG Partnership) Connexions Lancashire is the accountable body LIF	County electronic portal in NOW web site linking to learndirect database Reciprocal arrangement for Lancashire providers for more regular updating of the database Impartial and cross-provider promotion	Collaboration by NOW, the Ufi and learndirect Supported by the local LSC Miscellaneous local providers engaged in testing and updating

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 1: Selected IAG innovations in building working arrangements with national bodies (continued).

Sub-region	Lead organisation and funding	Innovation(s) in IAG working arrangements	Local–national collaboration
Norfolk Norfolk IAG Partnership Tel: 01603 215376	Norfolk IAG Partnership Jobcentre Plus	Joint work on accreditation pilot towards Guidance Council Quality Standards IAG delivery on Jobcentre Plus premises	Jobcentre Plus has developed a national protocol by which District Managers, IAG Partnership staff and staff of local LSCs can plan service delivery
North London North London IAG Partnership Tel: 0208 3676990	Open Learning Partnership North London IAG Partnership	Close working between IAG Partnership and learndirect hub IAG Partnership providing support in a number of local learning centres, and staff there involved in initial signposting of referrals	Cooperation across a range of local agencies Low level of local–national links
North Somerset North Somerset IAG Partnership (West of England Partnership) Tel: 01934 644443	North Somerset (West of England Network Group)	Outreach pilot project in rural areas Use of existing mobile library routes to offer IAG to small businesses and those considering self-employment Pilot project aiming for 50 positive contacts in a six-week period	Business Link with IAG Partnership

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 1: Selected IAG innovations in building working arrangements with national bodies (continued).

Sub-region	Lead organisation and funding	Innovation(s) in IAG working arrangements	Local–national collaboration
Oxfordshire Oxfordshire IAG Partnership Tel: 01235 524841	CfBT holds contract for Oxfordshire IAG Partnership IAG Partnership funds, plus NPS Thames Valley	NPS Thames Valley sits on IAG Management Group as a representative of the interests of smaller IAG providers NPS Thames Valley has delivered training to IAG Partnership Group on working with offenders and ex-offenders and how the NPS operates, and has run workshops for IAG Partnership members on the new disclosure of convictions requirements IAG Partnership providing workshops, other advice to assist NPS Thames Valley in going for matrix Standard accreditation CfBT has a contract with NPS Thames Valley to provide guidance workers as part of the Prison Service E2E team to provide offenders with IAG	NPS, IAG Partnership and Jobcentre Plus NPS Thames Valley makes referrals to, and receives them from, other members of the IAG network
Plymouth Plymouth IAG Partnership (Devonport Jobcentre) Tel: 01752 616200	Go4 (IAG Partnership)	Jobcentre matrix Standard accreditation pilot 20 Jobcentres in two districts	IAG Partnership, Connexions and Jobcentre Plus

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 1: Selected IAG innovations in building working arrangements with national bodies (continued).

Sub-region	Lead organisation and funding	Innovation(s) in IAG working arrangements	Local–national collaboration
Sheffield Sheffield IAG Partnership Tel: 0114 275 0799	Gateways to Learning (GtL) (IAG Partnership) Self-funded	Establishment of IAG Strategic Group Executive role, multi-agency driven, part of Sheffield First for Learning (Learning Partnership)	Multi-agency Founding collaboration between GtL and Connexions (Sheffield Futures) learnirect and Jobcentre Plus also involved
South London South London IAG Partnership Tel: 0208 649 6409	IAG Partnership QDF	Establishing LinkLine for learnirect learners Initial focus through an 0800 900 100 'Zoneplan' but now modified to stand-alone line Now seen as pre-pilot activity	IAG Partnership and 10 learnirect centres
Tees Valley Tees Valley IAG Partnership Tel: 01642 601600	Connexions Tees Valley IAG Partnership funds	IAG Partnership working closely with the NPS Tees Valley to assist later in going for matrix Standard accreditation IAG Advice Workers visit pre-release prison to provide IAG to offenders at the prison's jobclub Member of IAG Partnership sits on a Resettlement Group at another local prison with NPS, Jobcentre Plus and local LSC	IAG Partnership, NPS, Prison Service, Jobcentre Plus, local LSC

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 1: Selected IAG innovations in building working arrangements with national bodies (continued).

Sub-region	Lead organisation and funding	Innovation(s) in IAG working arrangements	Local–national collaboration
West of England West of England IAG Partnership Tel: 0117 907 4445	Connexions West of England QDF (part-funding)	Establishment of cross-IAG network, IAG Strategic Forum Building integrated IAG planning and delivery across different funding strands learndirect centres achieving matrix Standard accreditation Local learning helpline West of England common staff development model for IAG	IAG networks for Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Connexions West of England also manages the Ufi and learndirect hub

Source: Improving Local–National Information Advice and Guidance Working Arrangements: Case studies of good practice and innovation, LSC 2003

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 2: Status and engagement of national bodies in selected IAG innovations.

Sub-region	National agency engagement	Status	Outcomes
Berkshire	Business Link active involvement in QDF start-up and planning Business Link human resources team leading identification of SMEs	Pilot-scale activity Of 16 target firms, 14 working with IAG provision	Target (16 firms) likely to be achieved Novel engagement in IAG of all firms Working relationships with specific personal advisers
Birmingham and Solihull	Business Link Gateway team has been trained to identify and make referrals to services offered by the Birmingham and Solihull IAG Partnership	One-year pilot, which is likely to be continued on a revised basis	The service has been in operation since July 2002. The target of 200 IAG-related callers a quarter has been regularly exceeded by the Gateway team
County Durham	Engagement of local agencies stronger than national bodies Piloting in five Connexions centres held back by Connexions staff numbers, level of commitment and other constraints. Stronger at Connexions head office Jobcentre Plus involvement limited to one individual jobcentre but has involved commitment of staff time NPS involved through Young Offender Institution	Completed pilot now being rolled out by County and District Councils and others	Proven technology Link to e-government Home Office reviewing wider roll-out potential Limited success in Connexions Centres

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 2: Status and engagement of national bodies in selected IAG innovations (continued).

Sub-region	National agency engagement	Status	Outcomes
Coventry and Warwickshire	<p>Strong leadership by Business Link</p> <p>Business Link Executive Director as champion</p> <p>Inclusive multi-provider approach</p>	<p>Established programme of IAG referrals to providers</p> <p>Mainstreamed activity in Business Link</p> <p>Maturing personal adviser-provider collaboration</p>	<p>Extensive range of SMEs involved</p> <p>Engagement of Investors in People holders through IAG linked to workplace basic skills brokerage</p> <p>Low-cost engagement of SMEs (through mainstreaming)</p>
Derbyshire	<p>NPS has interest in developing learning (especially basic skills) opportunities for clients</p> <p>Local initiative in county working with IAG Partnership to bid for additional funding</p> <p>Training of project workers undertaken by IAG Partnership</p>	<p>Pilot completed</p> <p>Partners unsuccessful in securing follow-on funding</p>	<p>Range of additional learning and employment outcomes achieved for clients</p> <p>More effective referrals to local learning and basic skills provision</p>
Gloucester	<p>Business Link Gloucestershire with Gloucestershire Opportunities (GO) IAG Partnership</p> <p>Jointly developed NVQ advisory service for micro-businesses and SMEs</p>	<p>Ongoing project which will continue subject to local evaluation</p>	<p>Service launched with accompanying publicity and related web sites</p> <p>Since provisional initiation in January 2003, 50 outcomes (March 2003)</p>

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 2: Status and engagement of national bodies in selected IAG innovations (continued).

Sub-region	National agency engagement	Status	Outcomes
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	<p>Effective mix of local and locally based national bodies</p> <p>learndirect piloting focused on larger centres on better resources and staff support</p> <p>Connexions pilot seen as particularly effective, and joint branded Partnership Information Points (PIPs) now being explored</p> <p>NPS involved through pilot PIP in Hewell Grange Prison</p>	<p>Pilot programme now being rolled out</p>	<p>Demonstrated value has seen some co-branded PIPs developed</p> <p>Wider roll-out expected in Jobcentre Plus as a foundation for self-directed IAG</p>
Lancashire	<p>Bilateral development of portal through NOW (IAG Partnership) and the Ufi</p> <p>Strong collaboration and technical support through the Ufi and learndirect head office</p> <p>The Ufi is now profiling this as good practice and using the experience to model similar portals with other localities</p>	<p>Pilot complete</p>	<p>Stronger provider profile for IAG Partnership</p> <p>Demonstration of the technical viability of joining up local IAG and the Ufi and learndirect advice service</p> <p>Elsewhere, 10 other local interfaces have now been developed</p> <p>Each month sees 2,100 site visits and rising</p>
Norfolk	<p>Strong Jobcentre Plus district ownership supported by head office interest in piloting the standards and accreditation process</p> <p>Parallel pilot in Plymouth</p>	<p>Completed pilot</p> <p>National lessons to be reviewed by head office</p>	<p>Independent evaluation under way</p> <p>Further Jobcentre Plus development collaborations in IAG</p> <p>Stronger standardisation</p>

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 2: Status and engagement of national bodies in selected IAG innovations (continued).

Sub-region	National agency engagement	Status	Outcomes
North London	Effective joint development work between Ufi-hub learning centres and IAG Partnership	Ongoing programme of work	Demonstrated value of local planning and development of IAG services within Ufi hub
North Somerset (West of England Partnership)	National Business Link brand use by local office Business Link Manager actively involved in IAG/learning Partnership Steering Groups	Pilot outreach project in rural areas ends 31 March 2003 Review of pilot could initiate roll-out in other locations regionally	Not applicable
Oxfordshire	Strong collaboration with NPS Thames Valley	CfBT contract for NPS ETE team is ongoing	NPS Thames Valley to be assessed for matrix Standard accreditation in May 2003 NPS Thames Valley well known in IAG network and frequent exchange of information, queries, referrals and so on
Plymouth	Strong Jobcentre Plus district ownership supported by head office interest in piloting the GCQS and matrix Standard accreditation process Parallel pilot in Norfolk	Completed pilot National lessons to be reviewed by head office	All 20 jobcentres are now accredited Independent evaluation under way Further Jobcentre Plus development collaborations in IAG Stronger standardisation
Sheffield	Stronger involvement and leadership of local agencies Strategic forum has proven attractive to more senior managers of locally based national bodies	Group now formed	Early impact under review by partners

Annex C: The Case Studies in Summary

Table 2: Status and engagement of national bodies in selected IAG innovations (continued).

Sub-region	National agency engagement	Status	Outcomes
South London	National agency involvement in pilot centred on the Ufi and learndirect Early constructive involvement of the Ufi head office, but feasibility review showed difficulties in setting up Zoneplan, which needed further exploration	Pilot (pre-pilot) under way Initial formation, marketing and testing	Not applicable
Tees Valley	IAG work with NPS Tees Valley on matrix Standard accreditation was strong but needs renewed commitment Close collaboration between IAG and NPS in local prisons	matrix Standard work with the NPS has slowed since key NPS contact left Collaboration on prisons work is ongoing	A little more work required before NPS can achieve matrix Standard accreditation Ex-offenders assisted by ongoing contact between IAG Partnership and NPS
West of England	Strong approach to integrating national and local agencies Driven through central contracting role of Connexions for IAG (lead agency) and the Ufi and learndirect hub, and a 'one-stop-shop' for integrated developments	Staff development pilot under way	Helpline taking 1,200 calls a month Effectiveness review ongoing

Source: Improving Local–National Information Advice and Guidance Working Arrangements: Case studies of good practice and innovation, LSC 2003

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Publication enquiries 0870 900 6800

Reference MISC/0749/03



Learning+Skills Council