

**Guidance on the  
Inspection of  
Careers Companies  
April 2007**



**The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:**

- ▲ nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local education authorities (LEAs);
- ▲ primary schools;
- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ LEAs;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of Jobcentre plus.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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## **Guidance on the Inspection of Careers Companies**

This handbook contains guidance on how **inspectors** will apply the Common Inspection Framework for education and training in Wales to careers companies and providers of careers services. It will also assist providers in their self-evaluation.

### **How to obtain Estyn publications**

Estyn publications referred to in this guidance are available from Estyn, Anchor Court, Keen Road, Cardiff CF24 5JW and on the website [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk). All queries should be addressed to [enquiries@estyn.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@estyn.gsi.gov.uk).

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## Context

### Introduction

This handbook contains guidance on how inspectors will apply the common inspection framework for education and training in Wales to the inspection of careers service providers, usually careers companies. This guidance is, in the first instance, addressed to inspectors. However, it will also assist providers to self-assess the quality of their own provision.

### Definition of terms used in this guidance

The terms 'learner' and 'provider' are used in the common inspection framework. In this handbook, the 'learner' is the client. The term 'provider' refers to the careers company.

### Detail specific to the inspection of careers companies

#### Range of inspection

This handbook sets out for each criterion the range of features specific to careers companies that we will consider when making judgements. It also identifies the sources of evidence that will help us to reach these judgements.

The common framework sets out the purposes of inspection. These are to:

- identify strengths and weaknesses so as to help companies improve quality and standards;
- provide an independent published evaluation of the quality and standards achieved by the companies;
- keep the Welsh Assembly Government and the wider public informed about standards of clients' career decisions, planning and progression; and
- identify and promote good practice and help companies strive for excellence.

Inspection will aim to answer the question:

How good are the standards achieved by learners and what effect does the quality of provision and the leadership and management have on these standards?

The framework focuses on:

- the achievements of learners;
- the quality of education and training provided;

- the effectiveness and efficiency of leadership and management.

Inspection will focus on the experiences of learners and will evaluate and report on **seven key questions**. These are:

- how well do learners achieve?
- how effective are teaching, training and assessment?
- how well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?
- how well are learners cared for, guided and supported?
- how effective are leadership and strategic management?
- how well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?
- how efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?

Each key question is broken down into elements. Criteria relating to these elements are based on good practice to help inspectors make judgements about the quality and standards of provision. This handbook sets out for each criterion a range of features that inspectors may find helpful when evaluating and reporting. It also identifies sources of evidence that may assist in making judgements.

When we inspect the work of a careers company, we look at the services the company contracts with the Welsh Assembly Government to provide to:

- people undergoing full-time education in schools and colleges of further education;
- people undergoing part-time education in order to fit them for employment;
- people aged under 21 who have left education (other than higher education) or full-time training, up to two years earlier;
- people with disabilities (including those with learning difficulties), until they are settled in their career intentions;
- education institutions;
- employers;
- training providers; and
- parents and carers.

These services include:

- guidance services to adults;
- Youth Gateway; and
- Education Business Links (EBL), including the provision of work experience placements for young people in education.

Inspectors will focus on the experiences of clients and will evaluate and report on the **seven key questions** set out in the common inspection framework. These are:

- how well do learners achieve?
- how effective are teaching, training and assessment?
- how well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?
- how well are learners cared for, guided and supported?
- how effective are leadership and strategic management?
- how well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

how efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?

### **Notification**

Estyn will normally notify a careers company of inspection between six weeks and three months in advance.

### **Re-inspection**

The legal basis for re-inspection is the same as that for inspection. Where provision falls below the quality threshold, a re-inspection will usually take place within 12 months of the publication of the report. Re-inspection will only normally be necessary when key questions 1 or 5 are awarded a grade 4 or 5 during inspection. The re-inspection may focus on one or more key questions.

## The Common Inspection Framework

The following is an outline of what will appear in the inspection report before we address the key questions in the common inspection framework. It provides brief information on the nature of the provider.

**What is the nature of the provider?**

This section should include brief information on:

- the legal status of the company;
- how long the company has been operating;
- what services it delivers on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government;



## Standards

### Key question 1: how well do learners achieve?

Inspectors should evaluate and report on the standards achieved by learners, including:

#### **their success in attaining agreed learning goals**

In making judgements, you should consider, where applicable, the extent to which learners:

- 1.1 achieve good standards in their knowledge, understanding and skills;
- 1.2 achieve agreed learning targets and goals;
- 1.3 reach appropriate levels in key skills, including bilingual competence; and
- 1.4 succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.

and the extent to which:

- 1.5 results and retention rates compare well with national averages and local and national benchmarks; and
- 1.6 trends in performance show continuous improvement or the maintenance of high standards.

#### **their progress in learning**

- 1.7 acquire new knowledge or skills, develop ideas and increase their understanding;
- 1.8 understand what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve; and
- 1.9 make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage of learning.

#### **the development of their personal, social and learning skills**

- 1.10 show motivation, work productively and make effective use of their time;
- 1.11 behave responsibly and show respect for others;
- 1.12 achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality;
- 1.13 develop the capacity to work independently, including the skills necessary to maintain lifelong learning;
- 1.14 progress well in their personal, social, moral and wider development;
- 1.15 demonstrate an awareness of equal opportunity issues and a respect for diversity within society; and
- 1.16 are prepared for effective participation in the workplace and the community.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

**N.B. Terms in these sections are contextualised to make them easier to interpret when applying them to careers company.**

### □ their success in attaining agreed learning goals

#### 1.1 Do clients achieve good standards in their knowledge, understanding and skills?

You should look at how well:

- clients in education meet the outcomes defined within current ACCAC frameworks that relate to careers education and guidance, work-related education or personal and social education;
- clients make effective progress in relation to the service elements (**appendix 1**) offered by a careers company;
- clients understand about how to progress towards their career goals;
- they are informed about the world of work, the opportunities available to them, and the jobs they want to enter;
- they know how to seek out information effectively;
- clients can evaluate options and make informed decisions and appropriate life choices;
- clients' experience of work is used effectively to help them evaluate ideas and plans; and
- they have the skills and knowledge to make progress towards their short and long term goals.

You will need to evaluate how well clients are informed in relation to their development stage.

#### 1.2 Do clients achieve agreed learning targets and goals?

How well do clients achieve agreed goals in their career planning?

Personal career planning should take full account of individuals' personal or life circumstances. Plans should contain clear objectives/targets which describe the action the client needs to take in order to make progress towards either:

- developing a clearer career focus; or
- making effective progress towards a career goal.

How appropriate are the action to the client's plan?

How well does the company monitor whether these are carried out?

Where applicable (i.e. clients in or recently leaving education), how well do clients meet the outcomes defined within relevant ACCAC frameworks that relate to careers education and guidance, work-related education or personal and social education?

Evaluate any analysis that the company does to find out how well clients follow the advice they are given and how advice affects their progress.

During the inspection planning meeting the reporting inspector will have asked for a copy of the company's annual 'destination survey'. What analysis does the company do of this to evaluate the impact of guidance activities? Where there is no or insufficient evaluation:

- identify a 5% sample of clients;
- identify the percentages of matches/mismatches between last vocational guidance recommendation and career destination;
- do a follow up survey of those clients where there are mismatches to establish why this may be the case; and
- evaluate the contribution of guidance to clients' progress.

**1.3 Do clients reach appropriate levels in key skills, including bilingual competence?**

How well do advisers raise clients' awareness of key skills and bilingualism and their value in the labour market?

Bilingualism in terms of Welsh/English will be a general issue for clients, but account should also be taken of clients who are bilingual in other languages, such as Urdu or Cantonese. The extent to which staff achieve these aims will be evident from group activities or materials and from interview observation.

During discussions with clients, do advisers encourage progress in these areas and incorporate them into personal career plans where appropriate?

How well do clients take opportunities to achieve key skills and use languages other than English in education business link activities.

How aware are clients of the availability of bilingual information on career opportunities and labour market information and how well do they make use of it?

**1.4 Do learners succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background?**

How well do clients make progress towards and in their career goals, regardless of social, ethnic or linguistic backgrounds? Has the company done any benchmarking and analysed comparative data?

How well are clients motivated and challenged?

Are strategies to address problems based on appropriate analysis and evaluation of clients' views?

Do strategies have impact?

**1.5 Do results and retention rates compare well with national averages and local and national benchmarks?**

How well do clients make progress towards and in their career goals? If progress is poor, do they know what help is available to them from the careers company? What help do they get if they are at risk of dropping out from:

- education;
- training; and
- employment?

How do retention and drop out rates compare with other careers companies? How effective are different strategies within the company? Has the company done any benchmarking and analysed comparative data?

Are strategies to address problems based on appropriate analysis and evaluation of clients' views?

Are strategies effective?

**1.6 Do trends in performance show continuous improvement or the maintenance of high standards?**

In your evaluation, draw on evidence gained from:

- focus groups;
- quality probes;
- MIS regarding penetration rates and company achievement of contract targets;
- quality assurance reports and surveys;
- outcome analyses;
- impact evaluations;
- trend analyses;
- longitudinal studies;
- observations of performance; and
- product evidence kept by the company.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ their progress in learning

#### **1.7 Do clients acquire new knowledge or skills, develop ideas and increase their understanding?**

How well do clients improve their knowledge and understanding of job content and progression routes?

How well do clients develop effective skills to investigate and evaluate new career ideas appropriate to their personal circumstances and potential?

Where information is provided only through telephone contact or remote contact, how well do clients understand what they are told?

How realistic are individuals' choices in the context of their client profiles and circumstances?

What has the company developed to enable this process and how well are resources differentiated for:

- different age groups of clients;
- clients with different abilities; and
- clients with sensory impairment.

Where possible, observe how resources are used in:

- interviews and discussions;
- group activities;
- discussions or notifications of job/training vacancies or education courses;
- Youth Gateway activities; and
- education business link activities.

How effective are these resources?

What evaluation does the company do to evaluate the impact of these services, and do they use these evaluations to make appropriate improvements?

You may use focus groups of clients or small surveys to test your hypotheses. You will also use activity observations to inform your judgements on this issue.

**1.8 Do clients understand what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve?**

How well do clients gain insight from their experiences and use this insight to develop realistic, future targets?

How well do clients use work and other experience to reflect on their goals and develop their understanding?

How well do clients identify problems or barriers to their plans?

How well do clients work out useful targets for the future, particularly where there are barriers to their progress?

**1.9 Do clients make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage of learning?**

Are targets appropriately challenging for the individual? In addition to targets agreed or discussed in interviews, consider also the expectations made of clients in group activities, work experience, education business link activities or telephone interviews.

To what extent do clients extend their horizons in their goal setting, appropriate to their profiles?

How consistent is planning of the client's next step with longer-term goals?

How well do clients evaluate progress with advisers to monitor whether agreed targets are achieved?

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the development of their personal, social and learning skills

- 1.10 Do clients show motivation, work productively and make effective use of their time?**
- How well do clients follow through the action points in their career plans: is this monitored/discussed?
  - Do clients take important preparation steps for their next transition event in good time?
  - How well do clients and staff set short term behaviour targets where this will aid clients' success?
  - How well do clients apply in a timely manner for opportunities consistent with their plans?
  - How productively do clients work in group/mentoring activities/work experience/enterprise activities/Youth Gateway?
- 1.11 Do clients behave responsibly and show respect for others?**
- Look for evidence of how this is displayed in group activities, mentoring activities, enterprise activities, education business link activities, Youth Gateway, discussion groups and other activities.
  - Are the principles of respecting others reinforced by staff in work done with clients?
- 1.12 Do clients achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality?**
- Do clients attend for scheduled contacts/activities?
  - How is this monitored and documented?
  - What is done to follow up non-attendance?
- 1.13 Do clients develop the capacity to work independently, including the skills necessary to maintain lifelong learning?**
- Does the career planning process facilitate this?
  - How well do clients continue to develop skills independently?
  - How well do clients' understand and pursue SMART objectives to develop skills necessary to further their careers plans?
  - How well do clients understand the importance of the development of lifelong learning skills?

- 1.14 Do clients progress well in their personal, social and wider development?**
- How well do clients make progress towards their aims?
  - How well does the company track the progress of clients?
  - Are records up to date regarding the clients' circumstances, goals, skills, and achievements?
  - What additional support is made available for clients who may need it in order to sustain progression: how is this monitored? Is the support effective?
- 1.15 Do clients demonstrate an awareness of equal opportunity issues and a respect for diversity within society?**
- How well do clients show respect for others, regardless of their gender, race culture, disability or age?
  - How well do clients challenge the stereotypical views of others?
  - How well do clients make choices that are free of limitations imposed by stereotypes?
- 1.16 Are clients prepared for effective participation in the workplace and the community?**
- How well do clients make effective and informed choices to maximise their chances of success?
  - How effectively do clients identify or understand barriers to their progress?
  - Are effective solutions to barriers identified and agreed?
  - What specialist support is provided to those who have difficulty sustaining opportunities? How well do clients progress as a result of this support?



## The Quality of Education and Training

### Key question 2: how effective are teaching, training and assessment?

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

In making judgements, you should consider, where applicable, the extent to which teachers and trainers:

#### **how well teaching and training meet learners' needs and the curricular or course requirements**

- 2.1 stimulate and challenge learners to achieve excellence;
- 2.2 establish good working relationships that foster learning;
- 2.3 show good subject knowledge and familiarity with recent developments in their field;
- 2.4 plan effectively and have clear objectives for taught sessions and other learning experiences that learners understand;
- 2.5 use a range of teaching and training methods and resources which secure the active engagement of learners;
- 2.6 promote equality of opportunity and actively address issues of gender, race, disability and equality;
- 2.7 meet the language needs of the learners including providing access to bilingual teaching and training; and
- 2.8 plan to meet learners' individual needs flexibly and to monitor and review their progress.

#### **the rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning**

- 2.9 assess learners' achievements and progress fairly, accurately and regularly;
- 2.10 meet statutory requirements, and those of regulatory bodies, for recording and accrediting learners' achievements;
- 2.11 ensure that learners understand the purpose of assessment and are involved in planning their own progress and improvement; and
- 2.12 inform those with a legitimate interest about learners' progress and achievements.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ **how well teaching and training meet trainees' needs and the curricular or course requirements**

#### **2.1 Staff stimulate and challenge clients to achieve excellence (or potential)?**

Evaluate how well:

- staff extend the knowledge, skills and understanding of clients;
- staff motivate clients, set inspiring and challenging, but achievable targets;
- staff sustain clients' interest and build upon their knowledge, skills and understanding;
- staff give prompt and constructive feedback to clients on their decisions, and planning;
- help clients identify and resolve perceived barriers to progress; and
- challenge views that are restricted by applications of stereotypes.

#### **2.2 Do staff establish good working relationships that foster learning (and effective career planning and progression)?**

How well do staff establish relationships with clients that are conducive to helping them to make informed decisions and effective career plans?

Evaluate the extent to which:

- relationships between staff and clients are characterised by mutual respect.
- staff create an atmosphere where learning, information exchange, guidance and career planning takes place purposefully; and
- staff work together and with others to support and meet the individual needs of each client.

**2.3 Do staff show good subject knowledge and familiarity with recent developments in their field (i.e. opportunities in the labour market/ qualifications/ progression routes, etc.)?**

Evaluate how well informed are staff about:

- appropriate legislation;
- availability of opportunities;
- labour market information, both national, and local;
- progression routes to opportunities;
- the content and requirements of opportunities; and
- qualifications.

**2.4 Do staff plan effectively and have clear objectives for learning and guidance activities and other learning experiences that clients understand?**

Evaluate how well staff:

- set clear objectives for sessions;
- define the objectives of 1:1 sessions with clients;
- plan, deliver and manage activities planned in a manner that enables objectives to be met;
- negotiate or share plans with clients so they can understand what they are expected to achieve;
- adapt sessions to meet the needs of individual clients;
- set objectives that encourage clients to think independently, reflect on achievements, consolidate learning, develop planning skills and use the available resources, particularly information and communications technology (ICT) resources;
- agree suitable deadlines to encourage and enable clients to carry out actions in good time to implement plans effectively; and
- review/monitor clients' progress towards agreed objectives, where appropriate.

**2.5 Do staff use a range of methods and resources which secure the active involvement of clients?**

Evaluate how well staff:

- make clients aware of the range of services appropriate to their needs;
- use different methods to provide clients with appropriate development experiences;
- use appropriate resources effectively to ensure participation, development and learning;
- relate the suitability of the method and delivery to the needs of the particular client or group;
- introduce and conduct sessions with knowledge, skill, enthusiasm and imagination and help clients to be realistic and positive about their experience, development and learning;
- involve clients in discussion that increases their understanding;
- challenge clients effectively;

- explain ideas;
- use probing and well-constructed questions;
- help clients to evaluate different methods of learning;
- support and encourage personal research and learning through the use of clear and appropriate objectives; and
- use clients' experiences of work to gain a good insight into vocational goals and decisions.

**2.6 Do staff promote equality of opportunity and actively address issues of gender, race, disability and equality?**

Evaluate how well staff:

- promote equality of opportunity and challenge stereotypical views, behaviours and images;
- treat all clients equally, give clients equal access to services, and meet clients' needs irrespective of their race, gender or disability;
- behaviour is informed by the company policy relating to equality of opportunity; and
- Implement the company policy regarding equality of opportunity.

Further guidance

Services, materials and delivery methods should not contain any allusions to gender, race, religion or disabilities that could cause offence to clients from particular groups or discourage them from progressing.

**2.7 Do staff meet the language needs of the clients including providing access to bilingual services?**

Evaluate how well staff meet the language needs of all clients and (where appropriate) parents or carers. These needs may include:

- receiving services and information in clients' mother tongue or second language;
- receiving services in either English or Welsh as a second language; and
- providing support for clients who have a sensory difficulties or disability.

Further Guidance

Language needs should be clearly identified and specified in the client file and be known and understood by all staff. There should be appropriate arrangements for clients and parents or guardians whose preferred language is not English. There should be appropriate arrangements for clients and parents or guardians who wish to receive services through the medium of Welsh. Bilingual or Welsh medium delivery of service should be of good quality.

**2.8 Do staff**

Evaluate how well staff, where appropriate:

**plan to meet  
learners'  
individual  
needs flexibly  
and to monitor  
and review  
their progress?**

- assess clients' skills, knowledge; abilities competences, circumstances and potential;
- use assessment outcomes to inform work with clients and career planning;
- develop and review plans and objectives with clients that take full account of their individual needs;
- report the results of assessment to clients and agreed partners to ensure that clients can make the best progress;
- use endorsement certificates, learning plans or individual training plans to monitor the progress of clients with additional needs, and ensure such clients are receiving appropriate levels of support.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning

#### **2.9 Do staff assess clients' achievements and progress fairly, accurately and regularly?**

Evaluate how effectively:

- assessment of clients' circumstances contributes to helping clients to plan and achieve their objectives;
- where there is formal assessment, staff and clients understand assessment criteria, outcomes and procedures;
- clients are encouraged to improve their own performance and work effectively towards reaching their potential;
- assessment outcomes are communicated between all those involved in decisions;
- achievements towards goals, including qualifications, are recorded well; and
- assessment decisions are recorded clearly and appropriately; and
- client progress is monitored and informs further planning.

#### **2.10 Do staff meet statutory requirements, and those of regulatory bodies, for recording and accrediting learners' achievements?**

Evaluate how well:

- achievement is recorded;
- client achievements are used in career planning; and
- where applicable, accreditation processes meet the requirements of awarding bodies.

#### **2.11 Do staff ensure that learners understand the purpose of assessment and are involved in planning their own progress and improvement?**

Evaluate the extent to which:

- staff agree contracts with clients in order to ensure clients are clear how activities will meet their needs;
- the purpose of formal or informal assessment is understood and agreed by clients;
- clients are involved in planning and updating their own career plans;
- clients are involved in assessment of their own progress;
- assessment outcomes give clients a fair and detailed report of their progress in relation to any targets and goals set; and
- assessment provides a basis for promoting further achievement or planning.

**2.12 Do staff inform those with a legitimate interest about learners' progress and achievement?**

Evaluate whether:

- where appropriate, parents/carers are provided with updates of clients' progress towards career plan goals;
- clients receive credit for what they have achieved if they are unable to complete their education, training or chosen option;
- endorsements are used effectively to maximise clients' chances of making good progress;
- client files and documentation accurately record clients' achievements;
- staff communicate clients' relevant needs, with the agreement of clients, to those who can help individual clients to make effective progress; and
- staff encourage clients to use effective recording of achievement (e.g. Progress File, CVs, etc.) to support career planning and progression

**Key question 3: how well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?**

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

In making judgements, you should consider, where applicable, the extent to which learning experiences:

**the extent to which learning experiences meet learners' needs and interests**

- 3.1 meet learners' aspirations and, where appropriate, give them the opportunity to achieve accreditation;
- 3.2 provide balance, breadth, flexibility, coherence and progression;
- 3.3 develop learners' basic and key skills;
- 3.4 broaden and enrich learners' experience, through a variety of activities, including out-of-hours and off-site provision;
- 3.5 promote learners' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- 3.6 are enriched by effective partnerships with other providers and with all interested parties; and
- 3.7 meet legal and course requirements.

**the extent to which learning experiences respond to the needs of employers and the wider community**

- 3.8 provide effective work-related education;
- 3.9 promote learners' bilingual skills and reflect the languages and culture of Wales;
- 3.10 tackle social disadvantage and stereotyping and ensure equality of access and opportunity for all learners;
- 3.11 promote education for sustainable development;
- 3.12 take account of employers' needs;
- 3.13 develop the entrepreneurial and other skills needed to support economic development; and
- 3.14 reflect national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration.



## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the extent to which learning experiences meet learners' needs and interests

#### **3.1 Do the learning experiences meet clients' needs and aspirations and, where appropriate, give them the opportunity to achieve accreditation?**

Evaluate how well:

- the company encourages and supports recording of clients' achievements in sessions for which it has responsibility, such as Youth Gateway, education business link activities or group work;
- activities meet the needs and expectations of clients;
- clients are matched effectively to opportunities to which they are referred;
- activities help clients to improve their skills, reach goals, find employment or further their career plans;
- the company caters for all clients including those with additional support needs;
- the company caters for those for whom English or Welsh is an additional language, and for whom Welsh is a first language; and
- clients can receive services in the language of their choice.

Further guidance

Activities should take account of the Welsh Assembly Government's agenda for lifelong learning and economic recovery and sustainable development.

#### **3.2 Does the learning experiences provide balance, breadth, coherence, continuity and progression?**

Evaluate the extent to which:

- learning experiences are planned to compliment existing programmes (e.g. careers education/PSHE, employer programmes) clients may be involved in;
- clients have the opportunity to be included in an appropriate range of activities;
- activities are planned and managed to take account of clients' prior achievements, skills, experience and circumstances;
- experience of work is used well in helping clients to plan;
- activities take good account of the labour market and other available opportunities for progression;
- there are opportunities for distance and e-learning;
- clients are enabled to make informed choices; and
- clients in school or college are making appropriate progress towards ACCAC learning outcomes.

**3.3 Do the learning experiences develop clients' basic and key skills?**

Evaluate how well:

- activities contributing to the development of key skills are highlighted so that they can contribute to evidence of these skills;
- career planning pays due regard to any key skill requirements of progression opportunities; and
- appropriate action is taken to identify, encourage and support clients who need or wish to develop basic skills.

**3.4 Do the learning experiences broaden and enrich clients' experience through a variety of activities, including out-of-hours and off-site provision?**

Evaluate how well:

- clients' work experience, education business link activities, voluntary activities and involvement in extra-curricular activities contributes to the guidance process; and
- activities are planned to meet the needs of clients who have difficulty in accessing services.

**3.5 Do learning experiences promote learners' personal - including spiritual, moral, social and cultural - development?**

Evaluate how well:

- guidance activities and planning take account of all aspects of clients' circumstances and personal development.

**3.6 Are the learning experiences enriched by effective partnerships with other providers and with all interested parties?**

Evaluate how effectively:

- where appropriate, parents and carers are included in the development of clients' career plans;
- partnerships are negotiated and monitored to ensure that service provision compliments and supplements work done in partner organisations;
- careers staff liaise with training providers to ensure good transition management of clients;
- the company develops clear working links with other support organisations and uses these links to benefit clients; and
- partnerships with employers and other opportunity providers are used to benefit clients.

**3.7 Do the learning experiences meet legal and course requirements?**

Evaluate how effectively:

- the company ensures it meets the requirements of contracts with Wales Assembly Government;
- the company ensures that service provision meets or exceeds the requirements of appropriate legislation; and
- staff make reasonable efforts to ensure that clients are placed in opportunities that meet Health and Safety regulations.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the extent to which the learning experiences respond to the needs of employers and the wider community

#### **3.8 Do the learning experiences provide clients with an effective experience of work-related education**

Evaluate how effectively:

- clients' experience of the workplace is linked to clients' career planning;
- work-related opportunities brokered by the company meet clients' needs;
- partnership agreements are negotiated to ensure that the company's work in schools and colleges compliments and supplements work related education in the curriculum;
- education business link activities enhance clients' understanding of the world of work and contribute to their career planning; and
- achievements in the work place are accredited.

#### **3.9 Do the learning experiences promote learners' bilingual skills and reflect the languages and culture of Wales?**

Evaluate:

- the company's effectiveness in developing education business link activities for clients whose preferred language is Welsh;
- whether clients have suitable opportunities for receiving services in Welsh;
- whether there is appropriate labour market information relating to employment demand for the Welsh language; and
- how well the company's Welsh language scheme is implemented.

#### **3.10 Do the learning experiences tackle social disadvantage and ensure equality of access and opportunity for all clients?**

Evaluate how well the company:

- promotes equality of access to progression opportunities for all;
- tackles social disadvantage, challenges stereotyping and ensures equality of access and opportunity for all learners; and
- ensures that the way service delivery is inclusive of the profile of the local community.

**3.11 Do the learning experiences promote education for sustainable development?**

Evaluate:

- how realistic is the guidance staff give;
- whether clients are, where appropriate, matched effectively to opportunities;
- how well clients are encouraged to continue to learn and train when in the workplace;
- how well equipped clients are for making decisions as their career develops;
- how well clients understand the labour market.
- how effectively the company staff understand and respond to the needs of employers;
- how effectively relationships are built with employers and training providers; and
- the effectiveness of company links with CCETs or other regional planning bodies.

**3.12 Do the learning experiences take account of employers' views and needs of the community?**

Evaluate whether:

- formal mechanisms for consultation with employers are effective;
- company staff understand and respond to the needs of employers;
- there are effective relationships with employers and training providers; and
- there are effective company links with CCETs and other key agencies.

**3.13 Do learning experiences develop the entrepreneurial and other skills needed to support economic development?**

Evaluate:

- how well the company promotes the understanding and awareness of entrepreneurial and business-related skills;
- whether all clients have opportunities to participate in increasing their awareness of these skills during the process of career planning and education business link activities;
- whether the company develops and embeds a culture of entrepreneurship amongst staff and clients; and
- whether the company is innovative and responsive to the needs of clients and the business sector.

**3.14 Do learning experiences reflect national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration?**

Evaluate:

- how well the provider understands the needs of the local community and whether it has used this understanding to customise the experiences it offers to clients;
- the extent to which corporate and business plans reflect the national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration;
- the effectiveness of formal mechanisms for consultation with organisations that represent local communities;
- whether service delivery is responsive to community requirements; and
- whether client needs are met through a structured, flexible and appropriately customised provision.

#### **Key question 4: how well are learners cared for, guided and supported?**

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

In making judgements, you should consider, where applicable, the extent to which providers:

##### **the quality of care, support and guidance to learners**

- 4.1 plan and manage care arrangements and support services effectively;
- 4.2 work in partnership with parents, carers and employers, and take account of their views;
- 4.3 provide information on all the opportunities available and impartial guidance that helps learners choose the course which is right for them;
- 4.4 have induction programmes that help learners settle in quickly, understand their rights and responsibilities and the demands of the course and programme;
- 4.5 provide high quality personal support and guidance for learners, including access to personal and social education, tutorial programmes and specialist services;
- 4.6 monitor learners' punctuality, attendance, behaviour and performance, and take early and appropriate action where necessary;
- 4.7 provide effective careers education and guidance that helps learners to make informed choices;
- 4.8 assure the healthy development, safety and well-being of all learners; and
- 4.9 have effective procedures for the protection of children and clients and for dealing with appeals and complaints.

##### **the quality of provision for additional learning needs**

- 4.10 effectively diagnose individual learning needs;
- 4.11 provide additional support to meet individual needs, including those for learners with learning and/or physical disabilities, sensory impairments and other special needs; and
- 4.12 provide appropriate support for learners whose behaviour impedes their progress and that of others.

##### **the quality of provision for equal opportunities**

- 4.13 support and guide learners appropriately, taking account of their social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background;
- 4.14 promote gender equality and challenge stereotypes in learners' choices and expectations;
- 4.15 promote good race relations across all areas

- of activity;
- 4.16 have effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination, bullying and all forms of harassment;
- 4.17 secure equal treatment of disabled learners and make reasonable adjustments to avoid putting them at substantial disadvantage; and
- 4.18 recognise and respect diversity.



## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the quality of care, support and guidance to learners

#### **4.1 Does the provider plan and manage care arrangements and support services effectively?**

Evaluate:

- whether the company has clear and comprehensive policies that are reviewed regularly;
- whether there are procedures in place to give clients appropriate and effective support;
- how well staff implement policies through operational plans and support systems;
- how effective is the support given in managing the clients' transition between opportunities;
- how well clients needs are identified before they enter training provision, and whether these needs are communicated effectively and reviewed appropriately; and
- how effectively support is provided for clients with additional needs.

#### **4.2 Does the provider work in partnership with parents, carers and employers, and take account of their views?**

Evaluate, where appropriate:

- how well the company informs parents and carers of its services;
- how well the company informs parents and carers of key issues that affect clients' decisions;
- how well the company promotes partnerships with parents, carers and employers, for example, at key stages of clients' development;
- the effectiveness of these partnerships; and
- the effectiveness of the ways the company gathers, analyses and uses the views of parents, carers and employers.

**4.3 Are clients provided with information on all the opportunities available and impartial guidance that helps them to choose the course or opportunity which is right for them?**

Evaluate how well:

- clients' information needs are met; and
- clients are given guidance that is impartial.

**4.4 Do induction programmes help clients to settle in quickly, understand their rights and responsibilities and the demands of the course, programme or opportunity?**

How clear are clients about:

- the full range of services provided by the company and how they can access them;
- what they are entitled to from the company; and
- how to complain.

**4.5 Does the provider provide high quality personal support and guidance for clients, including access to personal and social education, tutorial programmes and specialist services?**

Evaluate whether:

- clients who have additional needs are clear what the company can do to accommodate these needs;
- staff who have appropriate skills and qualifications are available to provide specialist support;
- premises used are accessible to all clients;
- the company has appropriate and effective links to specialist support worker, such as interpreters/signers; and
- staff have developed appropriate links such education staff as personal tutors, SNCOs, mentors, or EWOs.

**4.6 Does the provider monitor clients' punctuality, attendance and performance, and take early and appropriate action where necessary?**

Evaluate whether:

- staff record accurately clients' attendance for or absence from scheduled activities or other activities to which they referred;
- absence from sessions are appropriately followed up; and
- staff give appropriate information and support to enable clients to attend interviews with other organisations to which they are referred.

**4.7 Is there effective careers education and guidance that helps clients to make informed choices?**

Evaluate whether:

- clients have a good understanding of the education, training and employment opportunities open to them;
- the decisions they are helped to develop regarding their next stage of progression are consistent with their longer term career plan;
- clients have effective assistance in making applications for jobs, training and for places in higher and further education;
- clients are provided with unbiased information and impartial advice and guidance about the choices available;
- Welsh medium or bilingual guidance is available;
- clients receive effective support at the key stages of transition;
- the decisions clients make are effective in enabling them to progress towards their careers plans; and
- the provider uses information about the destinations of previous clients to inform planning.

**4.8 Does the provider assure the healthy development, safety and well being of all clients?**

Evaluate whether:

- the company has appropriate policies and procedures to assure the health, safety and well-being of clients; and
- clients, staff and managers have a good awareness of health and safety practice and the procedures for reporting on any deficiencies in these areas.

**4.9 Does the provider have effective procedures for the protection of children and clients, including dealing with appeals and complaints?**

Evaluate whether:

- appeal and complaints policies and procedures are in place and promoted appropriately;
- staff are clear how they work to ensure accordance with child protection and that relevant policies are effective;
- the provider keeps records of all appeals and complaints and analyses these regularly; and
- there are effective procedures for dealing with racism, bullying, harassment and any other form of oppressive behaviour.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the quality of provision for additional learning needs

#### **4.10 Does the provider effectively diagnose individual clients' needs?**

Evaluate how effectively:

- records and information from education and training providers/employers are used effectively to assist in the assessment of client's additional needs;
- individual clients' needs are identified and recorded clearly;
- appropriate steps are taken to identify and explain the implications of clients' additional needs in making their career decisions; and
- activities undertaken with clients take good account of their individual needs.

#### **4.11 Does the provider provide additional support to meet individual needs, including those for clients with learning and/or physical disabilities, sensory impairments and other special needs?**

Evaluate how well:

- appropriate steps are taken to identify the implications of clients' additional needs in making their career decisions;
- staff use the outcomes of assessments, where appropriate, in putting suitable arrangements in place for clients;
- career plans and documents relevant to clients' decision making are made available in a medium that takes account of their needs;
- clients' key support workers are involved in arrangements for their careers progression;
- premises used by the company conform to the Disability Discrimination Act; and
- the company monitors the effectiveness and inclusiveness of its support strategies.

#### **4.12 Does the provider provide appropriate support for clients whose behaviour impedes their progress and those of others?**

Evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of:

- strategies for working with clients with behaviour that impedes their progress;
- measures for helping clients recognise and address behavioural difficulties; and
- partnerships with other appropriate agencies.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the quality of provision for equal opportunities

**4.13 Does the provider support and guide learners appropriately taking account of their social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background?**

Evaluate how well the company:

- identifies the range of needs within the profile of the communities it serves;
- takes account of the needs of clients who may have special inclusion needs such as different ethnic groups, women, those with learning difficulties and disabilities or clients with unusual working patterns;
- monitors the participation rates of the different groups to ensure that they reflect the needs of the local community and takes action to address imbalances; and
- uses monitoring data to evaluate the impact of policy and to inform planning.

**4.14 Does the provider promote gender equality and challenge stereotypes in learners' choices and expectations?**

Evaluate:

- whether policies and practices show that the company actively promotes equality, challenges stereotypes and encourages clients to consider non-stereotypical career options; and
- how well careers information material present positive images of an inclusive range of people.

**4.15 Does the provider promote good race relations across all areas of activity?**

Evaluate how effectively:

- policies and practices show that the company welcomes clients from a wide and inclusive range of backgrounds, abilities and cultures and promotes good race relations.

**4.16 Does the provider have effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination, bullying and all forms of harassment?**

Evaluate:

- the effectiveness of arrangements for making sure that clients are free from any form of discrimination and harassment whilst working with company staff or on work experience. These will include measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, racial discrimination and bullying; and
- how the company monitors, responds to complaints about harassment and checks that it has taken prompt and effective action.

**4.17 Does the provider secure equal treatment of disabled learners and make reasonable adjustments to avoid putting them at substantial disadvantage?**

Evaluate:

- how far policies and practices show that the company welcomes clients with disabilities and makes reasonable adjustments to facilities and resources to enable them to take part in all activities; and
- how well potential clients are informed of the facilities available and how they can access them.

If there have been difficulties in this area you should indicate how these have been addressed.

**4.18 Does the provider recognise and respect diversity?**

Evaluate whether:

- equal opportunity policies are in line with current legislation and official codes of practice in respect of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and religious belief;
- all clients have equal opportunities for learning, progression and achievement;
- there are appropriate arrangements for recognising and respecting diversity through the implementation of clear policies and procedures, including ensuring that any partner organisation meet these requirements;
- staff value and promote diversity;
- the company monitors and reviews its policies and procedures regularly in order to maintain their relevance;
- the company analyses all grievances and complaints relating to equality of opportunity; and
- the company makes sure that its inclusion strategy takes account of the full range of clients' needs.

Where there is no systematic monitoring of the effectiveness of the company's equality of opportunity policy, which informs planning and practice, the grade awarded for key question 4 should be no higher than 3.

## Leadership and Management

### Key question 5: how effective are leadership and strategic management?

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

In making judgements, you should consider, where applicable, the extent to which leaders and managers:

#### **how well leaders and managers provide clear direction and promote high standards**

- 5.1 give clear direction through values, aims, objectives and targets that are fully understood by all those involved in providing education, training and other services;
- 5.2 have explicit aims and values that promote equality for all, and which are reflected in the provider's work;
- 5.3 take account of national priorities and local partnerships and consortia agreements;
- 5.4 set and meet challenging, realistic targets and goals;
- 5.5 manage and improve the performance of individual staff, teams and departments; and
- 5.6 undertake effective staff appraisal or review to promote their professional development and improve the quality of provision.

#### **how well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities**

the extent to which governors and other supervisory board members:

- 5.7 help to set the provider's strategic direction;
- 5.8 regularly monitor the quality of provision; and
- 5.9 meet regulatory and legal requirements.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ **how well leaders and managers provide clear direction and promote high standards**

#### **5.1 Do leaders and managers give clear direction through values, aims, objectives and targets that are fully understood by all those involved in providing education, training and other services?**

Evaluate whether:

- there is a clear and appropriate mission which informs all aspects of the company's provision of services;
- the company regularly reviews its policy to take account of changing priorities;
- leaders and managers effectively communicate the mission to all stakeholders;
- leaders and managers at all levels build and co-ordinate teams whose members have a common purpose;
- leaders and managers implement the mission through strategic objectives, targets and values that all staff and relevant partner organisations understand and share;
- leaders and managers have explained to all staff how they contribute to meeting the company's mission and objectives;
- leaders and managers set and monitor targets effectively;
- action to secure continuous improvement is an integral part of the process; and
- leaders and managers secure organisational and management structures that facilitate improvement.

#### Further guidance

In evaluating the role of senior managers, focus on the impact of their work on improving the quality of provision and standards achieved.

Consider the contribution made by staff with leadership and management roles by evaluating how well staff understand and are committed to achieving the aims and objectives expressed in their job descriptions.

Consider whether staff manage their responsibilities effectively in relation to the time and opportunities available. Focus on the contribution of these staff to setting targets and improving standards and quality.

Consider and evaluate how leadership and management have impacted on the quality of services to clients.



**5.2 Do leaders and managers have explicit aims and values that promote equality for all, and which are reflected in the provider's work?**

Evaluate:

- the policies that incorporate the aims and values that promote equality for all;
- how well the policies are implemented, monitored and understood; and
- how well staff feel that they are treated with regard to equality of opportunity.

**5.3 Do leaders and managers take account of national priorities and local partnerships and consortia agreements?**

Evaluate how well:

- the company takes account of the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities, for example those in 'Extending Entitlement' or 'The Learning Country' and other key documents;
- policies are explained to staff and implemented by them;
- managers and staff monitor policies on a regular basis;
- formal partnerships work and whether they are effective in working for the benefit of the clients;
- partnerships are forged with education and training providers, including schools, further education colleges, and work-based training providers;
- partnerships are forged with regional bodies such as CCETs; and
- the account taken of national and regional planning benefits clients.

**5.4 Do leaders and managers set and meet challenging, realistic targets and goals?**

Evaluate:

- the processes for setting business targets;
- the effectiveness of targets at all levels;
- how 'SMART' these target are (SMART is an acronym meaning 'specific, measurable, achievable, resourced and time-related');
- whether targets are agreed for the senior management team, other managers, delivery staff, support staff and clients;
- whether staff and others have ownership of and understand the targets;
- whether staff are clear what is expected of them in terms of their individual contribution to company targets; and
- how much responsibility staff carry for achieving targets.

**5.5 Do leaders and managers manage and improve the performance of individual staff, teams and departments?**

Evaluate:

- how effectively leaders and managers have arranged to monitor the performance of individuals and teams against specific targets;
- the support and training given to staff and teams to meet these targets;
- the procedures used to deal effectively with low achievement and underperformance; and
- how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate improvements in performance to determine their impact on the standards achieved.

**5.6 Do leaders and managers undertake effective staff appraisal or review to promote their professional development and improve the quality of provision?**

Evaluate how:

- effective is the staff development programme;
- staff are enabled to update their industrial and professional knowledge and skills;
- effectively the company identifies and responds to individual, corporate, Welsh Assembly Government and, where appropriate, awarding body needs and gauges the impact of staff development on the quality of services and any improvement in standards;
- well the company prepares new staff for work;
- well the company prepares existing staff for new areas of work;
- well the company prepares existing staff to improve the quality of provision;
- well staff training meets the needs of the clients;
- well appraisal helps staff to review personal effectiveness and assists them in evaluating and improving their practice; and
- targets set for improvement are linked to the achievement of strategic and operational objectives.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ **how well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities**

#### **5.7 Do governors or other supervisory boards help to set the provider's strategic direction?**

Evaluate how well directors:

- are selected to ensure a good range of expertise and representation of key stakeholders;
- are trained and prepared for their role;
- understand their roles and the company business; and
- fulfil their responsibilities for strategic planning.

Further guidance

Look at the proceedings of the board of directors. Board papers and discussions with directors and senior managers should illustrate particular decisions and the background to them. Identification of examples before and during the inspection may allow you to trace the impact of decisions through the company's work.

#### **5.8 Do governors and other supervisory bodies regularly monitor the quality of provision**

Evaluate:

- how well informed directors are about issues which affect the performance of the company; and
- whether this information helps directors to take effective and appropriate decisions.

Further guidance

In most cases, directors will not have carried out analysis themselves to monitor the quality of provision. However, effective directors ask for information and consider analyses of the company's performance and discuss the action to be taken in response. Examine any documents provided for directors to see if they provide accurate and clearly presented information about the quality of provision. Track issues through the board of directors and look at papers presented to full board and sub-committees. A meeting with directors provides an opportunity for inspectors to discuss the steps directors have taken to assess and improve the quality of the company's work.

**5.9 Do governors and other supervisory bodies meet regulatory and legal requirements**

Evaluate:

- the training and updating that directors have received and whether it occurs regularly enough;
- the range of skills in the board of directors which match the needs of the company;
- whether managers have taken reasonable steps to inform clients, members of staff, and other stakeholders of the procedures they should follow if they wish to make a complaint;
- whether complaints are dealt with and appeals heard promptly by disinterested persons who have authority to act on their findings;
- whether complaints and appeal procedures are published and accessible; and
- directors' understanding of the duties set out in legislation and the duties imposed on them by other acts.

Further Guidance

Relevant legislation includes the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 - Code of Practice Post-16 (2002), the Children Act 1989 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and subsequent amendments.

Directors also need to understand the duties associated with the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act. Raise any specific and urgent issues with the ELWa health and safety officer.

**Key question 6: how well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?**

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

In making judgements, you should consider, where applicable, the extent to which leaders and managers:

**how effectively the provider's performance is monitored and evaluated**

- 6.1 are well informed about the performance of the areas for which they are responsible and use the information effectively;
- 6.2 establish self-evaluation arrangements which are comprehensive, systematic and based on first-hand evidence;
- 6.3 seek out, and take account of, the views of learners, staff and other interested parties; and
- 6.4 make sure that all those involved in providing education, training and other services understand and are fully involved in the self-evaluation arrangements.

**the effectiveness of planning for improvement**

- 6.5 set clear priorities and actions to bring about improvement;
- 6.6 make sure that priorities are supported through adequate allocation of resources; and
- 6.7 can show that actions taken have resulted in measurable improvements.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ how effectively the provider's performance is monitored and evaluated

#### **6.1 Are leaders and managers well informed about the performance of the areas for which they are responsible and do they use the information effectively?**

Evaluate:

- the quality of the self-evaluation report;
- whether the report includes a clear statement about the quality of the self-evaluation process;
- how well findings of the self-evaluation report match those of external inspectors;
- the match between the findings of the self-evaluation report and the associated action plans;
- how much managers know about performance in the area for which they are responsible;
- how managers ensure good communication with key staff; and
- how well managers use objective information systematically to evaluate performance and drive improvement.

#### **6.2 Do leaders and managers establish self-evaluation arrangements which are comprehensive, systematic and based on first-hand evidence?**

Evaluate:

- whether the self-evaluation process focuses on improvement in the quality and standards of services for clients;
- how effectively managers prioritise the matters they wish to improve and implement sound strategies to bring about desired improvements;
- whether the company is managed on the basis of an accurate assessment of its strengths and weaknesses;
- how well members of staff contribute to the process of self-evaluation, are aware of the findings, have ownership of the outcomes and take action based upon them;
- whether self-evaluation is a continuous process; and
- whether the self-evaluation covers all the aspects listed in the Estyn Common Inspection Framework.

Further guidance

Every aspect of a company's provision is a legitimate focus for self-evaluation. Discussions with the chief executive, senior managers and directors will help you to evaluate the extent of their awareness of quality and standards. Focus on the outcomes of the self-evaluation process and, in particular, on the actions taken to build upon strengths and remedy weaknesses.

**6.3 Do leaders and managers seek out, and take account of, the views of learners, staff and other interested parties?**

Evaluate:

- how effectively the company takes account of the views of stakeholders, through discussions with a representative sample;
- the quality of quantitative results from all surveys and questionnaires, and the use made of these;
- the use of consultative advisory groups representing a broad range of clients, staff and external partners;
- the representation of stakeholders on all key committees;
- the use made of newsletters and the Internet to share information; and
- the annual report which should outline some of the responsive changes that have been made to improve clients' experiences and the quality and standards of service.

**6.4 Do leaders and managers make sure that all those involved in providing education, training and other services understand and are fully involved in the self- evaluation arrangements?**

Evaluate:

- the role played by managers in identifying priorities in the planning, implementing and monitoring of strategies for improvement;
- whether all staff understand and play their part in implementing the strategies;
- how far teams work together effectively, especially across different sites, to bring about improvement; and
- how well staff contribute to self-evaluation and how effectively they use it to plan for improvement.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the effectiveness of planning for improvement

#### **6.5 Do leaders and managers set clear priorities and actions set to bring about improvement?**

Evaluate:

- the extent to which the company uses information from self-evaluation to set appropriate targets for staff and clients and implement effective improvement strategies;
- whether the company makes use of specialist quality standards associated with aspects of their work, for example Investors in People (IIP) or the European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM);
- whether the company takes account of the needs of different groups of clients in terms of ability, gender, ethnicity, disability, linguistic and social background;
- how effectively managers prioritise actions to make the greatest impact on standards;
- how well managers and staff work together to bring about improvement; and
- whether self-evaluation is flexible and responsive to matters which are, or ought to be, of current concern.

Further guidance

Without effective self-evaluation, it is unlikely that the quality of leadership and management will be good. However, by itself, a complex analysis is of little value without appropriate action to back it up. It is appropriate for companies to evaluate some aspects of quality and standards more frequently than others.

#### **6.6 Do leaders and manager make sure that priorities are supported through adequate allocation of resources?**

Evaluate whether leaders and managers:

- provide enough resources to meet priorities and objectives;
- take good account of contingency and continuity measures in their planning of resources; and
- take account of a wide range of resource needs, including money, resources and time, when allocating budgets.



**6.7 Can leaders and managers show that actions taken have resulted in measurable improvements?**

Evaluate whether:

- actions taken have had a positive effect, for example, by evaluating how well leaders and managers have identified shortcomings and addressed them quickly and effectively; and
- actions have led to measurable improvements in standards for the company as a whole, or for different groups of clients.

## **Key question 7: how efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?**

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

In making judgements, you should consider, where applicable, the extent to which:

### **the adequacy, suitability and use made of staffing, learning resources and accommodation**

- 7.1 there are enough qualified specialist and experienced teaching, training and other support staff;
- 7.2 all learners have access to appropriate learning resources that match the demands of their learning experiences; and
- 7.3 accommodation provides a suitable setting for good teaching, learning and support for all students.

### **how efficiently resources are managed to achieve value for money**

- 7.4 economic, efficient and effective use is made of available resources;
- 7.5 teaching, training and support staff are deployed, managed and developed effectively;
- 7.6 resources are matched to the provider's priorities for development; and
- 7.7 the use of resources is regularly reviewed in order to ensure value for money.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ the adequacy, suitability and use made of staffing, learning resources and accommodation

#### **7.1 Are there enough qualified, specialist and experienced professional and other support staff?**

Evaluate:

- whether staff have enough knowledge, skills and understanding to carry out all aspects of their roles;
- whether staff are suitably qualified;
- whether the company has regard to national training standards when they plan for professional development and review job descriptions and roles;
- whether job descriptions are up-to-date and reflect the work that staff do and the needs of the company;
- the company's staff development policy and find out what plans are in place to ensure that those who are not qualified can become qualified;
- what percentage of staff can and do deliver services bilingually;
- whether there are enough staff to deliver the contract targets effectively to all clients;
- how well staff work together in recording and tracking clients' progress;
- how well the system for staff appraisal identifies staff development needs; and
- whether the provider identifies poor performance and makes sure that support is effective in helping staff to improve.

#### **7.2 Do all clients have access to appropriate learning resources that match the demands of their learning experiences?**

Evaluate whether:

- the level of provision, use and condition of resources enhances the quality of services;
- guidance materials and information resources are of good quality and reflect the variety of clients' interests and present gender and cultural diversity in a positive way. Such resources include books, journals, ICT software, learning materials, and equipment held centrally;
- the match between the range of resources available and clients' needs is appropriate;
- the total budget for information and learning resources is enough;
- access to all information and learning resources in careers centres, including specialist ICT, CD-ROM, video and audio resources is good enough; and

- additional resources, such as contact with employers, outdoor pursuits centres, etc, are used effectively to enhance clients' career decisions.

**7.3 Does accommodation provide a suitable setting for good teaching, learning and support for all learners?**

Evaluate:

- whether careers centre accommodation and other accommodation used by staff is adequate;
- the overall quality of accommodation, including mobile centres, is adequate to promote effective work with clients; and
- the effectiveness of any arrangements to use specialist off-site accommodation.

## Using the criteria

You may find the following guidance helpful when evaluating and reporting on these areas

### □ **how efficiently resources are managed to achieve value for money**

#### **7.4 Is economic, efficient and effective use made of available resources?**

Evaluate:

- whether the company has enough staff and resources to deliver the business plan effectively;
- how well staff at all levels plan, monitor and provide resources to meet the needs of the clients and to deliver good value for money;
- how well the provider identifies additional resource needs and how effectively the budget is delegated;
- how effectively spending decisions relate to priorities for improvement and lead to benefits for clients;
- how well the provider uses available resources to achieve the best possible outcomes for all of its clients; and
- how well the company budgets systematically for all expenditure and is clear about the costs of any developments that are taking place.

Further guidance

An efficient company:

- knows the costs of major programmes and activities;
- identifies priorities for development and areas where savings can be made;
- keeps existing programmes, and subcontractors, under review and questions whether they are cost-effective;
- has careful and accurate budgeting for staff based on annual appraisal of need;
- provides the best standards of accommodation with resulting benefits to the work of the provider and the attitudes of staff and clients;
- makes sure that clients have enough resources of the right type to help them achieve the best possible decisions;
- makes decisions about priorities according to clear criteria; and
- holds contingency funds from which to meet pay and price increases and to allow for unforeseen circumstances.

**7.5 Are teaching, training and support staff deployed, managed and developed effectively?**

Evaluate:

- the company's staff development policy and find out what plans are in place to make sure that those who are not fully qualified gain appropriate qualifications;
- the extent to which staff are able to deliver services bilingually and whether there is a training programme to expand the numbers who can do so;
- whether there are enough staff to deliver the full range of services effectively to all clients;
- whether caseloads and duties are distributed effectively;
- whether the company adequately plans and manages staff absence;
- how well staff work together in planning, managing and recording clients' progress;
- how well the system for staff appraisal identifies staff development needs;
- the way in which the company identifies poor performance; and
- the procedures for supporting staff to improve their performance.

**7.6 Are resources matched to the provider's priorities for development?**

Evaluate how:

- well resource decisions are linked to the strategic vision of the company;
- clearly the development priorities agreed in the corporate plan are the starting point for matching resources to proposed service development;
- flexibly the organisation can re-allocate resources in response to major changes; and
- the company reviews the use of resources to evaluate and benchmark against other companies or organisations.

**7.7 Is the use of resources regularly reviewed in order to ensure value for money?**

Evaluate how well:

- managers use value for money principles to secure resources and services, including any services contracted in from external providers;
- effective management information is used to gauge performance;
- value for money principles are an integral part of management for the future rather than applied to past actions only;
- the company compares its provision with that of other companies;
- managers consult widely, whenever appropriate, about the decisions they make with others, both inside and outside the organisation;
- the company makes appropriate changes in response to the challenges they have set themselves;

- the company successfully balances the effectiveness of its provision against costs;
- the company considers the standards and outcomes achieved by clients and the quality of the services when planning budgets;
- budgets are delegated within companies in order to secure value for money;
- an internal funding model links resources directly and fairly to need;
- staff are encouraged to be responsive and entrepreneurial in service planning in order to secure value for money;
- the amount of time spent on different areas of activity reflects the provider's priorities;
- the roles and responsibilities within the management structure make sure that needs are met without overlap or duplication; and
- the provider uses data and statistics to benchmark value for money.

#### Further guidance

The role of the inspector is not to be an auditor or an accountant, but to evaluate how far processes to secure value for money are in place on the basis of the evidence available to them.

## Appendix A: Service Elements

Service element	Indicative content
Knowledge and information	<p>How well informed are clients?</p> <p>This should focus on the quality and standards of information services delivered by the company, including company publications, careers library resources, Internet information, careers and labour market information, activities to raise clients' awareness of the world of work and telephone information services.</p>
Career planning	<p>How well do clients plan their career/development?</p> <p>This should focus on the quality and standards of advice and guidance, taking account of the full range of client groups the company is contracted to work with, and taking good account of the need to provide guidance throughout the process of clients developing and testing their career decisions.</p>
Making Progress	<p>How effectively do clients make progress to enter the labour market?</p> <p>How effectively do they progress in the labour market? In the case of those who are already in the labour market, but are seeking advice or who have lost their jobs, how effectively do they make and implement?</p> <p>This should focus on the quality and standards of services to support clients in accessing job or training opportunities, including the help that is provided to support clients who are not able to fulfil their plans immediately. Consider how the company promotes, facilitates and quality-assure the outcomes of career-planning process through effective links with employers, education institutions, training providers and other key organisations helps clients to make progress.</p>



## **Appendix B: Information required from providers before inspection**

During the pre-planning meeting, the reporting inspector will have discussed the need to select a representative sample of clients. As soon as possible after the pre-planning meeting, the nominee will need to plan a timetable of observations of a representative sample of client-related activities. Meetings with managers and staff with key responsibilities and will also need to be timetabled. The aim is to plan a tight programme of visits to observe enough work to inform robust judgements, but one that also has some built-in flexibility.

Inspectors reserve the right to identify and sample an additional or alternative sample of clients or activities to collect evidence on which to base their judgements.

### **Information requirements:**

- official title and status of the training organisation;
- location with direction and map of main centre(s);
- brief notes on the company's history, its main characteristics and the context in which it works;
- the company's mission statement, strategic plan and business plan;
- organisational chart showing main areas of responsibility and management structure;
- a full list of staff, locations and services provided;
- latest annual report;
- details of activities or special events during the inspection period;
- details of national quality awards held by company;
- self evaluation report;
- Welsh Assembly Government statistical summaries for past 3 years showing achievements against agreed targets; and
- outline timetable of planned visits and meetings.

**Note:** inspectors will rely on the nominee or other designated staff to make arrangements in advance and inform clients, staff and others of times and locations of observations and interviews.

## **Appendix C: Information required from providers during inspection**

- changes to the timetables of programmes being inspected or inspectors' schedules for meetings with key personnel;
- policy statements;
- the provider's Welsh language scheme;
- staff manual/handbook/procedures;
- details of staff qualifications and experience for full-time and part-time training staff;
- job descriptions for key staff;
- the provider's response to priorities set out by the Welsh Assembly Government, for example, social inclusion and sustainability, both economic and environmental;
- market research and analysis;
- links with industry, other providers and the local community;
- labour market research;
- socio-economic and educational information for the community served;
- links and working relationships with other agencies, including CCETs, commercial and industrial employers, schools, further education institutions and community education;
- quality assurance arrangements, including those for workplace and sub-contracted provision;
- quality development plan, monitoring arrangements, manual and last report;
- evaluation plan and any evaluation reports produced during past two years;
- list of career plans/action plans produced during six months prior to inspection;
- details of companies who have registered vacancies during six months prior to inspection;
- partnership agreements for current business year;
- statements of arrangements with partner organisations;

- copy of complaints procedure and written details of any complaints received in the last year;
- evidence files for self-evaluation;
- features of special interest;
- staff development plan; and
- endorsement certificates.

## Appendix D: Possible sources of evidence

### Documents:

- corporate plan/business plan;
- policy documents;
- Progress Files;
- career plans or action plans;
- endorsement certificates;
- partnership agreements or statements of arrangements;
- group work/lesson/session/activity plans;
- evaluation plans and reports;
- client/stakeholder feedback reports;
- evaluation reports produced by or on behalf of the company;
- client documentation;
- client records;
- destination survey and analyses;
- job descriptions;
- minutes of meetings; and
- benchmarking studies.

### Observation:

- guidance activities;
- education business link activities;
- mentoring activities; and
- information giving activities.

### Discussions with:

- clients;
- company staff;
- key stakeholders; and
- organisations with which the company works in partnership.