What makes a good training provider?

March 2010

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 authorities (LAs);
→ primary schools;
→ secondary schools;
→ special schools;
→ pupil referral units;
→ independent schools;
→ further education;
→ adult community-based learning;
→ youth support services;
→ youth and community work training;
→ LAESs;
→ teacher education and training;
→ work-based learning;
→ careers companies;
→ offender learning; and
→ the education, guidance and training elements of the Department for Work and Pensions funded training programmes.

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.

Contents

Introduction

1   Outcomes from Estyn's inspection work during the current cycle (2004-2010) of work-based learning identifies that standards are still inconsistent across the sector. In particular, too many providers are still achieving only satisfactory grades for Estyn's generic key questions. With the continuing drive to improve 'coasting providers' to reach 'excellent and good' it is important that the best practice seen in the better performing providers is shared with the less successful providers.

2   This handbook does this through charting the key aspects of what makes a good training provider through charting the 'learner's journey' (see appendix 1) from their initial recruitment to eventual progression, with case studies of best practice gathered from Estyn's inspection work.

3   In addition to the 'learner journey' the handbook also features three other key elements that contribute to ensuring the good quality and standard of delivery by providers. They are:

→   Self-Assessment;
→   Partnerships; and
→   Bilingualism and Welsh culture.

4   The handbook also aligns with the:

→   Estyn 2010 inspection framework (see appendix 2);
→   DCELL Quality and Effectiveness Framework (QEF); and
→   the LSIS leadership and management toolkit for WBL providers
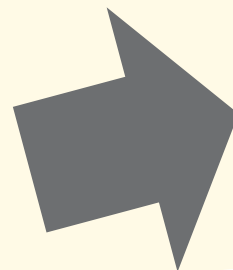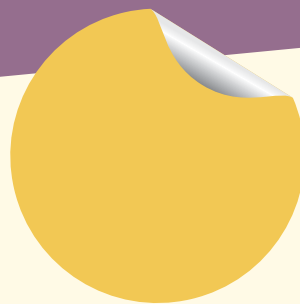
Background and methodology

5   In the autumn of 2009, following an approach by Estyn to the Welsh Assembly Government it was agreed that Estyn would undertake production of this handbook through its remit responsibilities to the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills.

6   To take this forward Estyn conducted a initial review of inspection reports of work-based learning providers to identify good practice and the factors that contribute to raising standards of WBL in Wales. This work was undertaken in conjunction with the National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW) and DCELLS. Estyn subsequently identified a sample of 17 providers to contribute to the development of the handbook. Of these, seven providers were further invited to provide case studies to be included in the handbook.

7   The handbook is to be launched to the sector through two workshops for all WBL providers in Wales to be run jointly by Estyn with NTfW and DCELLS at the end of March.

8   The handbook is in two parts. Part one refers to the "learner journey" (see appendix 1) and explores each aspect of the learner journey from recruitment to progression. Each stage of the journey sets out what Estyn expects of a provider at that stage. We also highlight examples of strengths and shortcomings that we have identified in providers through our inspection work. Finally, in this part, we provide examples of best practice together with case studies identified during our inspection work.

9   In part two we consider the three other key aspects that help make a training provider good or better. Of these three, self-assessment forms the cornerstone of our approach to inspection work from Estyn 2010. In addition, we reflect on what we would expect to see from providers, citing examples of strengths and best practice from our inspection work.

Part One:
The Learner Journey

1.1 Recruitment

10 The recruitment and selection process of the provider aims to attract and select learners who are best suited to the training programmes and employment opportunities providers can offer. Matching the right person to the right training programme and ultimately to the right employer is critical to success. If this is not done well, this can result in employers losing their trust in the provider and the learner taking a considerable time to recover from the setback to their career hopes.

11 Effective recruitment and selection is therefore crucial for all concerned and providers need to have a system in place that will support this initial stage of the learner journey. Various recruitment methods are available to providers, for example, shared apprenticeships, group apprenticeships and the use of 'host' employers. Some providers recruit directly and then find appropriate employers while other providers are contacted by employers who have recruited potential learners themselves.

Strengths

→ good initiatives to widen participation by under-represented groups;
→ good promotion of equality of opportunity;
→ wide and well-promoted range of progression opportunities; and
→ outstanding actions to support social inclusion.

Best practice

12 Providers should:

→ ensure that potential learners fully understand the recruitment and selection process;
→ ensure all staff understand the recruitment process and what is involved;
→ give information clearly to enable potential learners to decide if the learning opportunity meets their needs;
→ identify potential progression routes and possible destinations for learners in relation to their training programme;
→ describe the types of environments in which learning will take place, for example in the workplace, workshop or classroom;
→ train 'first point of contact' staff to engage with the potential learner and convey information at the right level;
→ ensure all recruitment staff apply equal opportunities throughout the process;
→ involve more than one trained staff member in the process and ensure all decisions are recorded;
→ take steps to address under-representation from any particular groups;
→ where learning opportunities are not appropriate for learners, signpost them to other areas of learning or providers that may be more suitable;
→ monitor and review with the learners, at each stage of the recruitment process, to ensure fairness and consistency; and
→ ensure that recruitment procedures are subjected to quality monitoring activities such as observation and learner surveys which are reviewed annually.

13 Providers should also ensure that promotional brochures, prospectuses and web sites featuring images reflect the diversity of the provider's community and that all promotional materials are screened for unintentional bias for particular groups. Providers should also consider making recruitment material available in different languages and formats where appropriate. All promotional literature should be reviewed regularly to ensure all information is accurate and appropriate.

Case study

Widening participation to under-represented groups

Coleg Menai monitors recruitment data very well to check for under-representation of particular groups. As a result, the provider identified under-representation of females on construction and the built environment routes. Three years ago, the provider ran an activity day in March for girls to sample construction skills. The provider worked in partnership with Careers Wales who went into schools to encourage girls to come on the 'Only Girls Allowed' day.

On the first activity day, girls tried bricklaying and plastering skills. However, this did not lead to any success in widening recruitment so the following years' activity days included plumbing, joinery and electrical skills. This was more successful and as a result a few females are now following these routes. The activity days now take place each year and the provider next plans to address the under-representation of males on care routes.

Case study

Very effective recruitment procedures

Gorseinon College uses its employment liaison officers very effectively to market its training courses to employers and to recruit learners. These officers have very good links with employers and continue to expand the number they work with through a variety of different methods including cold calling.

The college marketing processes incorporate work-based learning very effectively and a good partnership with Careers Wales also helps to recruit learners. Potential learners come to open evenings at the college to discuss their training. They receive clear information about their chosen training programme and potential progression routes. They leave with an application form and then attend an initial interview, either at school or in college. At this interview, learners receive an initial basic skills assessment to ensure they are on the right level of course and to put any support arrangements in place.

The provider monitors recruitment of learners thoroughly in relation to their gender, age, ethnicity and disability. Its Equality and Diversity manager discusses any issues of under-representation with the College's co-ordinator of the work-based learning course. The provider then puts actions in place to address these. For example, two years ago there were very few males on the Health, Public Services and Care courses. Through active marketing with Careers Wales and the nursing homes, this year there has been a significant increase in the number of males on these courses.

1.2 Induction

14 Once the learner has been appropriately selected it is important that they are retained on their programme. One way of doing this is by providing a well-planned induction programme. An effective induction programme will help form learners' first impressions of the provider which will influence their attitudes and motivation and improve their attendance, retention and commitment. High-quality induction training will help learners settle quickly into their employment by helping them understand the environment in which they are based and the job which they are doing. Good training providers complement this by providing a comprehensive induction to inform learners about their training programme and the additional services and support available to them. This includes an essential introduction to topics such as equality and diversity, health and safety and assessment methods.

Strengths

→   well-planned and delivered induction;
→   well-structured and purposeful induction;
→   flexible and well-designed induction; and
→   thorough and effective induction.

Best practice

15 Providers should:

→   plan carefully, taking the opportunity to interest and motivate learners so that they settle into their programme quickly and easily;
→   cover what is entailed in the learning programme and how progress will be assessed;
→   carry it out in such a way as to build the learner's interest;
→   include a variety of teaching and learning methods;
→   use participative learning methods to make the process more interesting and effective;
→   check learners' understanding regularly during the process;
→   include/cover health and safety, equal opportunities and so on, and elicit the expectations of the learner;
→   continue to reinforce key messages from induction, for example, through wall displays or notices;
→   use progress reviews to reinforce the messages from induction, particularly health and safety and equality of opportunity; and
→   ensure learners receive separate inductions if their programme involves on and off-the-job training.

Case study

Well planned induction which effectively interests and engages learners

Induction in **Hyfforddiant Gwynedd** runs for four days over several weeks. This well-planned induction process, which involves groups of learners, motivates learners and helps them settle into their programme quickly. Good use is made of a variety of teaching methods to ensure learners participate fully in this part of the training.

During induction, learners receive clear information about the provider, their learning programme, proposed timetable, assessment of their progress and their responsibilities whilst on the programme. They have group discussions on equality and diversity and receive good written information on this topic. Learners receive thorough training on health and safety and have the opportunity to take a test to gain a level 2 award in Health and Safety in the Workplace.

All learners have half a day's motivational training. Initial assessment takes place in this period. Recruitment officers give one-to-one feedback to learners who have a basic skills need on the third day of induction. They explain clearly how support systems operate. Learners draw up their Individual Learning Plans with their recruitment officers on induction.

A recent addition to the induction programme is training on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC). Activities for this are innovative and fully engage learners to give opinions on this topic. For example, learners use a ball of string in an activity to show links between the seven key themes in ESDGC. Good discussions develop and learners develop skills to listen to other people's point of view and respect their opinions.

Case study

Effective one-to-one induction for learners in employment that contributes to high completion rates

Focus On has an effective and clear pre-induction procedure to determine whether learners are suited to a training programme. Assessors take part in employers' introductory meetings with new employees and provide good and appropriate advice about the range of roll-on-roll-off training programmes available and the commitment training involves.

Once employees make the decision to undertake training they have an effective and thorough induction to their programme. Induction takes the form of a one-to-one interview lasting one and a half hours with an assessor. In this, the assessor reiterates the commitment required for training, before the learner signs a form to start training.

At induction, learners receive a detailed induction pack, which clearly sets out their rights, responsibilities, and what they have to do to achieve their qualification. The assessor explains clearly what the training involves and how assessment takes place. The induction pack also contains information about health and safety, equality and diversity and ESDGC. The assessor discusses these with the learner in relation to the employer's company policy. Learners receive an assignment on health and safety.

Learners and assessors draw up an action plan for the learners to update their CV and write a little about their job role and the role of their team. Learners also receive good information about the benefits of Welsh language skills, as many work in contact centres in Wales.

1.3 Initial assessment

16   Effective initial assessment is a learner-centred process. It involves a set of procedures that ascertain what previous experience, aptitudes and abilities a learner has to establish a skills profile of the learner and the destination that is most appropriate for them. The procedures may include screening tests for literacy, numeracy and language (followed by fuller diagnostic testing if required) as well as learning styles, manual dexterity and skills testing. Effective initial assessment will ensure that learners are on the right programme and are properly supported while on it.

17   A well designed and managed process can be used to gather information to support the whole of the learners' experience and inform other stakeholders who are interested in the learners' progress and success. The results of initial assessment should inform individual learning plans so that training and support are delivered that will meet the needs of each learner. Good use can also be made from information gathered by referral agencies who may have gathered information from a potential learner before referral.

Strengths

→   good use of initial assessment to plan learning;
→   thorough initial assessment and identification of support;
→   good initial assessment, guidance and support; and
→   thorough and well-managed initial assessment procedures.

Best practice

18   Providers should:

→   make initial assessment a positive experience for the learner;
→   identify the starting point so that a learning plan can be produced with the learner;
→   ensure the learner understands the purpose of the assessment and how, when, and where it will take place;
→   make use of a wide range of information to develop a full picture of the learner, for example, interests, hobbies, attainments to date, ability and aptitude;
→   use screening and diagnostic tests as part of the initial assessment to identify a particular support need, such as in literacy, numeracy or language, by identifying the learner's current level;
→   ensure the learner is comfortable with the assessment and is provided with feedback on the results and how these will inform his or her learner journey;
→   Tell the learner what the initial assessment has found and how that information is to be used;
→   make sure the learner is placed on the right programme with the appropriate support;
→   Recording the findings from the initial assessment alongside the individual learning plan; and
→   Checking that the individual learning plan reflects the initial assessment.

Case study

Effective initial assessment for Skillbuild learners

Sport Train Wales has a very thorough Initial Assessment process to identify the basic skills needs and other support needs of learners on its Skillbuild programme. The provider believes this process is the key to its success in retaining learners and enabling them to succeed.

Many learners have previously been unsuccessful in engaging in education and training and most learners on the programme have basic skills below level 1 when they begin their training. Trained basic skills tutors undertake the basic skills initial assessment and support the learners throughout their training programme. Tutors explain the assessment process to learners very carefully and give feedback in a positive, supportive way.

If a learner has a basic skills need, the basic skills tutor carries out a diagnostic assessment to identify in more detail where difficulties lie. The tutor presents this assessment and gives feedback in a way that suits the learner's level of need. For example, if a learner is at entry level 1 the tutor will give them only a small amount of extra numeracy examples to find out where their difficulties lie. This reduces the feeling of failure for the learner and makes it more likely the learner will want to improve their basic skills.

The basic skills tutor and the learner then draw up an individual learning plan for basic skills development. The learner is fully involved in setting Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART) targets in the Individual Learning Plan.

Learners also complete a self-assessment of their 'soft skills' at the beginning and end of training. This is in a simple format of a scored tick box and is easy to read. Learners are encouraged to reflect back on what they put at the beginning of the course to see if their perception is different when they have completed their training.

At the initial assessment the tutor and learner also discuss other personal needs that may form a barrier to learning. In a minority of cases, this results in learners going on to a pre-Skillbuild programme for six weeks to prepare for the Skillbuild programme.

Case study

Initial Assessment linked well to induction

At **Learnkit**, a well-designed initial assessment and induction process link seamlessly together. This effective learner-centred initial assessment process establishes a very good skills profile for each learner.

Most learners at Learnkit are on the Modern Apprenticeship route for dental nursing. Learnkit uses the following assessments very effectively to identify learners who need extra support:

→ initial assessment for basic skills

→ A test which includes a working memory test, a perceptual test and a reasoning test. An analysis of the results of this test last year showed it highlighted learner needs very well. The provider put extra support in place to enable all those who scored below average on this test to achieve their full framework qualification.

→ Learner self-assessment of 'soft skills' such as self confidence, motivation, ability to learn. Learners score themselves at the beginning and end of the course to see the progress they have made.

→ An assessment which includes questions about learning styles and explores barriers to learning.

→ An occupational skills assessment. The training officer and the employer carry this out. It gathers information on the skills learners have already gained in the workplace. Learners also discuss with their training officer their long-term progression route options, such as dental therapy or dental hygiene.

During the induction period, the training officers have a one-to-one two-hour interview with learners to feed back findings from the various assessments and to indicate how support (if needed) will be put in place to help them achieve. The training officer summarises these findings in a report, which feeds into the learner's individual learning plan.

Case study

Matching the level of basic skills needed for a training programme with the basic skills competences of learners

Work-based learning teams at **Yale College** carry out an audit of literacy and numeracy skills required for each level of all training routes.

Tutors match learners' level of basic skills against the level required for the course after they have done their basic skills assessment. If a learner's basic skills falls below the level of that required for the programme they wish to undertake the support team will work with them for several months to bring them up to the level required. However, if the skills gap is too great a learner starts on a lower level course and is encouraged to progress.

Since the introduction of this process more learners go on to the level of course which matches their skills and so are able to achieve their full framework.

1.4 Learning plans

19 To maximise learners' potential and to develop their skills and knowledge, it is essential that the training provider and employer jointly plan a training programme that meets both the needs of the learner and the employer. Each learner should have an individual learning plan which shows what training they will receive, both on-and off-the-job, to ensure that they achieve their qualification or the aims and objectives set out in their individual learning plan. The plan must also identify any additional support that they may require and should take into account the learner's current knowledge, skills and experience. Training providers should ensure that training staff and employers are provided with whatever information they require to make them aware of the needs of the learner and fully understand the learner's learning programme.

Strengths

→ effective use of individual learning plans;
→ good individual learning plans; and
→ good development of individual learning plans.

Best practice

20 Providers should:

→ develop an individual learning plan that is used effectively as a 'working document' throughout the time a learner is with the provider, that is focused on delivery of learning, assessment, support and target setting;
→ ensure staff receive training in order to understand the results of initial assessment, such as literacy, numeracy or language requirements, together with other learner support needs such as dyslexia, and to ensure that the learner's individual learning plan reflects the necessary support and assessment arrangements;
→ take account of the learner's previous experience and learning, so that targets and times to gain assessments in an area in which the learner has previous experience are realistic and do not hinder the learner's progress;
→ develop targets that stretch the learner and keep them focused on achieving realistic milestones;
→ ensure the learner has an individual learning plan that is based on their initial assessment and clearly maps the route from that starting point to the achievement of individual goals, for example completing the full framework, or gaining sustainable employment;
→ involve the learner in creating the first draft of their learning plan, understanding the reason for its contents and updating the plan with the learner (and employer if applicable) as training progresses and circumstances change;
→ plan in more detail for the short-term targets and in outline for the longer term targets; and
→ use the individual learning plan to record how any additional support needs, identified by initial assessment are to be provided for.

Case study

Learning plans which involve both learner and employer in planning the training programme

Yale College's trainer/mentors develop effective individual learning plans with learners. They use initial assessment information and prior achievement details well to develop SMART targets with learners.

Trainer/mentors record additional support needs and there is a statement about the learner's agreed commitment to attend regular eight weekly reviews. A progress review planner is included in the individual learning plan so the learner has a record of these dates. The individual learning plan clearly maps the route from a learner's starting point to the achievement of their individual goal.

Employers are fully involved in the completion of the individual learning plan and sign up to the balance of on-the-job and off-the-job training they have agreed with the provider.

The individual learning plan also includes an action plan to complete workbooks by the first progress review. These workbooks, given at induction, cover health and safety issues, Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC), enterprise and Welsh culture.

Learners with basic skills needs have an individual learning plan for development of their basic skills. They agree this with a basic skills specialist.

Effective use of the individual learning plan to link into progress reviews

The individual learning plan at **Focus On** is a comprehensive document. It records prior achievement and initial assessment in detail. It also records outcomes of discussions about extra key skills chosen, optional NVQ units and the achievement of the technical certificate.

There is a detailed section on forward planning called the initial plan. This records where the training takes place, the activities to be undertaken to achieve evidence and who ensures the action will take place. These short-term targets are realistic, achievable and timed and link well into the first progress review.

1.5 Teaching and learning

21 Good teaching and learning is central to improving the achievements of learners. It is essential that providers offer a tailored programme that is agreed with the learner. This will encourage motivation and improve opportunities for achievement. It is critical to select and deploy the most appropriate teaching and learning strategies in order to engage learners. Learners will need to develop employability skills. For some learners it will be appropriate to deliver these predominantly in the workplace; for others a classroom setting might be more appropriate. A range of teaching/training arrangements may need to be considered to suit the needs of individual learners. For example, day or block release, one year off-the-job training or all on-the-job training. Good teaching and learning practices should seek to embed key skills along with personal and social skills in all aspects of the learning programme. This is most likely to be successful where vocational and functional skills and other teachers work together, through joint planning or team teaching, or both.

22 Good providers will establish consistency in teaching and learning across the whole organisation; operate an effective developmental lesson observation process; share best practice; and rigorously monitor and evaluate what they are doing. Constructive feedback has a strong influence on learners' motivation and self-esteem. Effective feedback informs learners about what they are doing well, what they need to do to improve and what actions they need to take to make those improvements.

Strengths

→ well-managed and delivered off-the-job training;
→ good off-the-job practical teaching;
→ good off-the-job training resources; and
→ good standards of off-the-job teaching and learning.

Best practice

23 Providers should:

→ co-ordinate off-the-job and on-the-job training as closely as possible so that learners have the opportunity to put into practice the learning they acquire away from the workplace;
→ where a session is part of a series, ensure a degree of continuity and progression between sessions. A plan can illustrate the relevance of each part of the programme and how the sessions progressively develop the learners' knowledge and skills;
→ ensure teachers combine sound knowledge and understanding of the subject with a keen appreciation of how learners learn;
→ deliver well-structured lessons, making the learning objectives clear at the start of each the session;
→ support the sessions with good quality materials and practical examples drawn from the trainer's own experience or from the learners' experience in the workplace;
→ have pace and challenge, based on high expectations of the learner;
→ exhibit skilful use of well-chosen questions to engage and challenge learners and to consolidate understanding;
→ contain effective assessment of learning and teachers/tutors being able to rapidly adjust what they are doing in response to their assessment of pupils' learning;
→ teachers/tutors planning, organising and managing varied learning experience;
→ ensure teachers/tutors give constructive and detailed feedback and guidance;
→ enable learners to develop personal and social skills, for example, group projects can help learners to gain self-discipline, self-esteem and self-confidence;
→ find ways to enable learners to participate, for example, through group discussions, so that they find sessions more interesting;
→ summarise sessions at the end and check learners' understanding at regular intervals; and
→ give learners regular feedback on the progress they are making.

Outstanding teaching and learning

At **Coleg Llandrillo** work-based learning assessors, college staff and employers combine on-the-job and off-the-job training and assessment very well. The provider achieves this through very effective liaison between assessors and employers. Employers provide learners with very good opportunities to gain vocational skills in the workplace.

All teachers and trainers use their high levels of specialist subject knowledge to plan clearly and effectively for high quality learning experiences. They use a good range of teaching styles and challenge learners well. They attend regular staff development events to share best practice in teaching and learning strategies.

There has been a consistent increase in the use of Moodle as a virtual learning platform in work-based learning. This enables learners to become more independent learners.

Teachers, trainers and assessors set realistic, challenging targets for learners to achieve excellence. They develop supportive relationships with learners and plan assessment very well to help learners achieve their learning objectives.

Learners' attainment of key skills is excellent. Key skills in all routes link effectively to job roles and vocations. Many learners achieve key skills at a higher level than their framework requires and gain additional qualifications. Many learners take the technical certificate at a higher level than required.

Flexible delivery of learning is a key element to success in this provider. For example, learners working in care homes have all their training on-the-job. If care homes are small then the provider brings groups of learners together to deliver training. With other learners, the provider negotiates times of delivery to suit their work patterns. For example, the provider delivers twilight (4-6pm) childcare sessions in the college.

The provider uses e-portfolios effectively. Apprentices in Care, Contact Centres and Foundation Modern apprentices in Construction can submit their evidence using e-portfolios. This allows them to upload photos or video clips of them carrying out aspects of their job for assessment evidence. For example, apprentice plumbers upload photographs taken from mobile phones, whilst they show their competence in fixing pipework.

Learners have good opportunities to widen their experiences outside the workplace and college. For example, many learners benefit from participating in local, regional, national and international competitions, as well as trade fairs.

In Skillbuild, youth learners work on regeneration projects through a local organisation, which promotes environmental awareness. Learners engage in a variety of team building activities such as building dens and measuring water flow. From these activities, they develop both social and academic skills.

Case study

Active learning

At **Sport Train Wales**, training officers effectively use Skillbuild learners' interest in sport to engage them in learning. Many learners have not previously engaged fully in education or training.

Training officers use a variety of activities to improve learners' skills. For example, they regularly take them out on to the adjoining playing field or into the sports hall to play competitive games to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. These include team games to improve their alphabetical ordering skills and multiplication tables. As learners are part of a team, these activities also develop oral skills and social skills.

Case study

Well-planned off-the-job training with good learner involvement

In **Learnkit** training officers use an excellent mix of theory and practical activities that cater for the learning styles and preferences of the learners. They make very good use of 'Movie Maker' technology to demonstrate complex techniques to learners, for example mixing materials for oral treatment in dental nursing. Learners then practise this technique in the training session. Many learners take the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom back to their employers who incorporate it into their dental practice procedures.

During training sessions, learners experience a good mix of learning activities. These include individual tuition, use of internet research, making presentations and joining group discussions. Most theory sessions conclude with the use of '**Qwizdoms**' which are handheld computers containing a variety of quiz formats. These test the knowledge learned in the session and engage learners well in consolidating their learning.

The provider regularly asks learners about how they can improve teaching and learning. Learners attend termly 'Lunch and Listen' sessions to discuss improvements and feed back findings to managers.

The apprenticeship training at Learn-Kit develops 'reflective learners'. Learners are required to complete a personal learning log. They record how and what they are learning in the workplace. This prepares learners well for future files they may have to complete for their continuing professional development in dental nursing.

Case study

Skillbuild learners involved in online opportunities to feed back their views to decision makers

At **Jobforce Wales**, Skillbuild tutors effectively link key skills to job search and ESDGC discussions. They also address various aspects of citizenship and learners use online opportunities to feed back their views to decision makers in government. For example, they use the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) 'Voices for Change' initiative.

Learners have contributed opinions to a variety of discussions, including facilities for wheelchair users and waste dumping in the local area. This involvement encourages learners to be part of the community and express their opinions on local matters that affect them.

Case study

Outstanding engagement with previous Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) learners to take responsibility in improving their basic skills

Sport Train Wales run basic skills awareness sessions for learners when they start their programme. This is similar to the model used in basic skills awareness for tutors. It makes learners think about why they need to improve their basic skills and encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning, knowing they will have support.

Learners already on the programme pass on to new learners their acceptance of the need to improve their basic skills so this also engages new learners more readily. As a result improving basic skills has become an embedded culture.

1.6 Progress reviews

24   To check that the learner is getting the most out of their training programme it is important to monitor their progress at regular intervals. This will ensure that any additional training or support needs that are identified are properly addressed. Progress reviews are at a point in time when all parties involved in training take a step back to monitor the progress being made by the learner in their training programme and to measure their progress towards completing their individual learning plan. They also involve setting targets to further complete the plan.

25   Progress reviews must take place in the workplace and fully involve the employer. They should check learner welfare, and progress in training, while reinforcing equality of opportunity and health and safety. Learners need to take an active part in reviews and should be encouraged, and given the opportunity, to prepare fully for the review. Good progress reviews should identify changes that need to be made to individual learning plans or to support arrangements. Progress reviews should record discussions and set challenging and realistic targets to avoid slow progress by the learner.

Strengths

→   effective progress reviews and target-setting
→   good progress review and monitoring arrangements
→   thorough reviews of learners' progress

Best practice

26   Providers should:

→   ensure progress review meetings are held regularly and sufficiently frequently to maintain momentum;
→   use the learning plan as the basis for the review and update the learning plan with agreed actions and targets;
→   use the meetings to monitor progress, identifying causes if it is slow, and increasing the frequency of meetings in response;
→   record progress and targets for the period until the next review meeting;
→   plan in detail the training the learner should receive between the current and next progress review meetings. This should cover all aspects of the programme, including, where appropriate, on- and off-the-job training, or any additional support;
→   ensure the learner prepares for the review;
→   ensure the learner, their trainer and workplace supervisor are included in the review;
→   bring out feedback from the learner together with that from the workplace supervisor, advisor, trainer or mentor;
→   use the meeting to reinforce key messages on health and safety and equality of opportunity;
→   record progress and targets for the period until the next review meeting; and
→   help the learner and employer to appreciate the value of progress review meetings.

Case study

Monitoring the quality of progress reviews

Jobforce Wales reviews learners' progress monthly and sets monthly targets for progress and final achievement dates. The provider monitors the quality of progress reviews very thoroughly. A senior manager quality checks all progress reviews to ensure that they refer back to the learner's individual learning plan and to previous reviews. In addition, the manager checks that the training officer discusses health and safety and equality of opportunity with the learner, at every review. A spreadsheet summarises this quality checking and a traffic light system highlights any learners whose progress is slower than expected.

Training officers have a bi-monthly supervision meeting with a senior manager. At this meeting, they discuss the reasons for any learners who are not making the expected progress in training and the actions agreed to rectify this. Jobforce Wales identifies this bi-monthly one-to-one supervision meeting of training officers as a key contributor to high learner achievement levels.

Case study

Active involvement of learner in progress reviews

At **Focus On**, learners see their assessor every three weeks. Together they complete an interim assessment record and write about actions completed. This information feeds into the progress review, carried out every sixty days. Progress review appointments are very flexible to suit shift times. Home workers have their progress reviews at home.

There is good, active involvement of learners in their progress reviews. For example, assessor and learner discuss a topic from either Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) or equality and diversity at each review. The provider has a bank of relevant work-based topics.

On their progress reviews, learners record a summary of the discussion that takes place on these topics. Learners also record, on their progress reviews, the impact of training on their working practice.

Case study

Fully inclusive progress reviews

At **Gorseinon College**, all progress reviews fully involve learner, employer and college staff. At the start of training, the Employment Liaison Officer stresses the employer's commitment to be present at progress reviews and arranges reviews at suitable times of day or weekends to enable all three to be involved. This regular involvement of the employer ensures that detailed planning of the next stage of training can take place with the agreement of all three parties and they can discuss any issues about progress to date. Checking on any equal opportunities and health and safety issues is a regular part of the progress review.

All learners are involved in tracking and reviewing their own progress. They know what progress they are making and what they need to do to complete their framework. Learners have ownership of their progress reviews as they receive a copy, as does the employer. If the learner is under 18 the parent /guardian receives a copy of the progress review.

Case study

Effective tracking system to monitor progress of learners

Coleg Llandrillo has an effective system for tracking learners' progress. Assessors update the system every time they have a progress review with learners. Their work-based learning tracking system provides a daily working tool for assessors and managers and is available on the staff college intranet site, so assessors can access it off-site.

This system helps the assessor manage their workload and managers can see the progress of each learner for whom they are responsible. Additional reports show which learners are likely to need more time to complete and what support systems will be put into place to help them complete.

Administrative staff check each progress review to ensure details are complete and record any omissions on the tracking system.
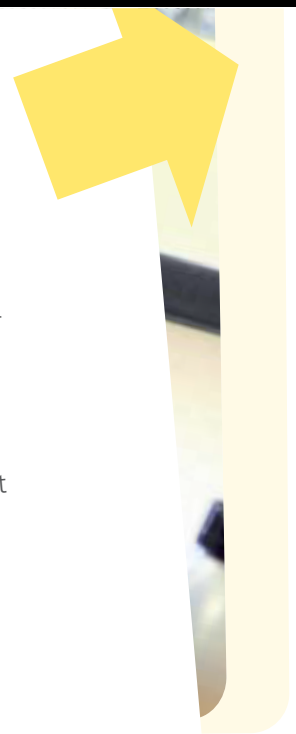
1.7 Assessment

27 Learners are required to collect evidence to demonstrate that they are competent in a range of different activities. Each learner must be allocated an assessor who will discuss, agree and identify all relevant assessment opportunities so that learners have the best possible chance of achieving their qualification aims. Assessment should fully involve the learners and be seen as a motivational tool. Learners must be fully aware of what they are going to be assessed on and the methods of assessment that will be used. Learners need to be familiar with, and confident in, the use of alternative assessment methods to avoid any barriers within the assessment and feedback process.

28 Assessment must be flexible and identify assessment opportunities to allow learners who make rapid progress to be given more challenging targets and assessment opportunities. Learners with the appropriate experience and prior knowledge should have the opportunity to gain relevant accreditation.

Strengths

→ good assessment planning
→ good assessment practice
→ good use of work-based assessment
→ particularly effective learner-centred assessment
→ particularly flexible arrangements to support assessment and learning

Best practice

29 Providers should:

→ explain the principles of assessment to ensure that the learner understands the purpose and process of assessment;
→ encourage learners to collect evidence for their portfolio at an early stage;
→ develop the assessment plan over the duration of the programme;
→ ensure the assessment plan is flexible;
→ assess the learner's progress in gaining skills and knowledge;
→ use a wide variety of methods for assessment, for example, direct observation, witness testimonies, professional discussion, and relevant documents from the workplace;
→ ensure employers are aware of assessment practice;
→ ensure workplace supervisors understand the level of competence required to meet the relevant occupational standard;
→ ensuring assessors give written feedback to learners so that they know what they have achieved and what more they need to do to achieve the required standard; and
→ keep records of assessment decisions so that they can be internally and externally verified.

Case study

Effective assessment process

Jobforce Wales has developed very effective assessment methods that make sure the learner fully understands the purpose and process of assessment. Assessors use a wide variety of methods. This ensures assessment is appropriate to the learner and situation, and makes good use of time. All learners receive clear verbal and written feedback on their performance during assessment.

The provider has good arrangements for the recognition of learners' prior experience. This means that learners can complete their full qualification frameworks earlier than they may have expected.

Training officers help learners to identify all relevant assessment opportunities. For example, they use observations in the workplace alongside very good open questioning methods to assess learners. Many training officers use mobile phones or video cameras to record evidence. They use audiotapes to record professional discussions between the learner and the training officer. Whenever possible these discussions include the workplace manager.

Best practice in internal verification and monthly standardisation meetings maintains the quality of the assessment process.

Case study

Assessment linked well with a highly effective Internal Verification system

Coleg Llandrillo plan assessment very well to help learners achieve their learning objectives. Assessments are valid, rigorous, accurate, fair and consistent with awarding body specifications and regulations. All assessors give detailed feedback to learners to improve their performance.

The assessment process links very effectively into the internal verification system. Vocational area internal verification meetings take place every two weeks to ensure there is standardisation of approach across work-based learning and the whole college. In these meetings, assessors exchange portfolios and share best practice. In addition to these meetings, all work-based learning assessors meet twice a year to share best practice in assessment.

1.8 Achievement

30 Monitoring learning achievement means assessing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes/ values learners have gained together with setting and monitoring agreed realistic targets to improve outcomes. Progress and achievement bring enjoyment and confidence to learners as they gain:

- knowledge, understanding and skills;
- the qualifications they seek;
- access to further learning and employment opportunities; and
- the wider benefits of learning.

31 In order to track learners' achievement during learners' programmes and at the end of them, and to ensure accurate completion of Individual Learning Records , providers need to collect and record data and produce regular management reports that show the learners' achievement of units and qualifications. These reports will play a significant role in supporting management decisions and will inform the provider self-assessment process and quality improvement arrangements. Although the main focus is predominantly on accredited qualifications, it is important to recognise that learners will have also acquired a range of personal and social skills and attributes that will help them in their future progression. Whether or not the opportunity has arisen to accredit these additional skills, it is important that learners are aware of and value these skills and attributes.

Strengths

→ high success rates
→ good progression rates
→ good job outcomes
→ good celebration of achievement

Best practice

32 Providers should:

→ focus on individual learner outcomes;
→ use a range of assessment methods to gather information about the learner's progress;
→ track; and record the learner's progress against agreed goals;
→ set and monitor realistic targets to improve outcomes;
→ ensure the learner is involved in monitoring their own progress;
→ recognise when the learner has achieved the relevant goals;
→ ensure the learner understands the link between achieving their targets and moving towards their goals;
→ use this information to monitor the learner's progress and plan the next steps;
→ prepare and support the learner in moving on to the next stage in their lives;
→ ensure that at the next stage the learner continues to be supported in realising their aspirations;
→ take account of what information the learner needs to take with them;
→ involve other relevant stakeholders/agencies in contributing to the collection of information;
→ scrutinise the achievements and progress of different groups of learners;
→ identify areas for improvement through an effective self evaluation processes; and
→ monitor the achievement and progress of learners with special educational needs (SEN).

Case study

High apprenticeship completion rate in Childcare

Hyfforddiant Gwynedd attributes their high success rates in Childcare to achievable target setting and the very thorough preparation and support they give to learners. Many learners begin on Skillbuild and have work experience in schools before they progress on to a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship in Childcare.

Learners receive good basic skills support. Learning coaches also support learners who have issues that may prevent them from making progress, such as poor self-confidence. In addition, the provider has a trained counsellor who listens to learners' personal issues and signposts them to the relevant agencies if necessary.
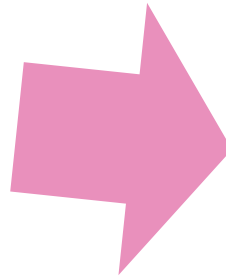
Case study

High overall framework apprenticeship completion rate

Focus On attributes its very high apprenticeship completion rate to a very thorough induction process and very good support to learners. At induction, assessors emphasise learners understand the commitment they are undertaking before they begin training. The provider also emphasises the possible progression routes for learners. This motivates learners to achieve and continue in training.

Throughout the training programme, assessors give very high quality support to learners and maintain regular contact with them. This includes very good support to learners who feel they may want to drop out during their training. The assessor has one-to-one discussion with these learners about the problems they face and how they can overcome these difficulties. This results in very low dropout rates.

Case study

Celebration of success

Sport Train Wales places great emphasis on celebrating the success of their learners, many of whom have not experienced success in education and training previously.

These full day celebrations of success take place four times a year. The provider combined a recent 'Children in Need' event with the presentation of certificates. The Welsh indoor rowing team came to Sport Train Wales. In the morning, members of the team helped learners organise a rowing challenge for charity on the rowing machines. All learners were involved in planning the event. This experience helped them develop organisational skills. All learners then took part in the rowing challenge.

In the afternoon, the Welsh indoor rowing team presented certificates that learners had gained during their training programme.

Good involvement of employers in celebration of learners' success

Coleg Llandrillo holds an awards ceremony twice a year to celebrate the high percentage of apprentices who achieve their full framework. Learners' families and their employers attend. The work-based learning manager introduces each apprentice and says a little about their employer. This emphasises the importance of partnership work in a learner's success.

1.9 Progression

33   Tracking learners throughout their journeys, both during and after provision, is an essential aspect of the provider's role. Providers should provide an effective progression structure that shows programmes of progression from level to level that include the literacy, language and numeracy levels needed to succeed at each stage. Providers' records should ensure that there is an effective process in place to monitor progress both pre- and post-exit.

34   Learner surveys at exit, and after exit, can capture valuable feedback and data. Increased opportunities to further the success of learners can be achieved by linking progression to opportunities for further training, or to potential work opportunities through Information and Guidance (IAG) and other sources. Providers should ensure that all data is carefully collected and analysed, taking account of internal and external targets.

Strengths

→   thorough analysis of the success rates of different groups of learners
→   good use of a wide range of data in programme review
→   good monitoring of learner performance

Best practice

35 Providers should:

→ aim to have good success rates for each programme in each area of learning;

→ decide on a good success rate for each programme, taking into account the views of the funding body, awarding bodies and success rates in the sector;

→ understand why some learners fail to complete or progress and take actions to address this, to improve success rates;

→ gather evidence from as many sources as possible about what constitutes a good success rate for each area of learning;

→ look at inspection reports for providers in a similar position;

→ measure achievement or success in terms of the objectives that the learner set out to achieve during the programme. This could include making progress in acquiring literacy, numeracy, language or skills for life;

→ aim to have at least satisfactory sustainable job outcomes;

→ encourage learners to review their learning plans and complete evaluations of the training programme;

→ use feedback from learners and staff to make improvements to the learning experience;

→ use the learning plan and progress reviews to advise learners about ongoing learning and/or job opportunities; and

→ complete records tracking discussions and guidance for progression.

Case study

High progression rate in Skillbuild

Hyfforddiant Gwynedd has an overall progression rate from Skillbuild youth of 80%. Learners progress on to Foundation Modern Apprenticeships, Further Education and employment. The provider achieves this by having thorough discussions with learners about possible training routes so the learner can have appropriate work experience.

The childcare route illustrates this well. Learners who are interested in childcare training discuss the commitment involved in this route with the provider. If they want to follow this route on their Skillbuild programme the provider arranges a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check as well as an interview with a school. By the autumn term, learners can begin on Skillbuild with work experience in a school.

In the Skillbuild training, these learners develop IT skills and basic skills as well as developing self-confidence in working in a school. At the end of 13 weeks on Skillbuild, they have learned some skills for childcare. In their review, the provider discusses with the learner whether they are ready to progress on to a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship in childcare. They discuss aspects such as time keeping, suitability and attendance record.

Last year, most learners who started on the childcare route in Skillbuild went on to start a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship in Childcare.

Case study

An expectation of progression

Yale College has an effective progression structure in place. Trainer/mentors discuss progression opportunities with learners at recruitment and induction. This discussion continues throughout a learner's training. There is an expectation for learners to progress on to higher levels. Trainer/mentors are good role models because they have all progressed from apprenticeships into their present role.

Many learners who complete their full Foundation Modern Apprenticeship return to college to complete a Modern Apprenticeship within three years of leaving. The provider remains in contact with former learners and their employers. This enables the provider to monitor when the learner is working in an appropriate job role or environment to progress on to a Modern Apprenticeship. For example, one learner progressed from a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship in Business Administration, on to a Modern Apprenticeship in Business Administration and then began a Management Modern Apprenticeship within two years.

Case study

High progression rates

At **Gorseinon College**, many learners progress on to a higher level qualification. Rates are particularly good for Foundation Modern apprentices in Customer Service and Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (Motor Vehicle). For example, a learner began on a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship in Motor Vehicle, progressed to a Modern Apprenticeship, became a technician in the college in the motor vehicle workshop and has now started a Postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) to deliver training.

One Skillbuild learner on the armed forces preparation course had a poor record in engaging in education and training when he started the course but through the good support he received became fully engaged in his learning and won the army preparation's course top award.

In the college, there is a long established process of listening to learners and staff. The provider uses feedback from these very effectively to improve the learning experience.

Part Two:

Key elements in ensuring good provision

2.1 Self-assessment

36 Rigorous self-assessment, with accurate judgements about strengths and shortcomings is essential to underpin quality improvement for all learning providers.

37 An effective self-assessment process must be clearly defined, involve all stakeholders and fully integrated with other quality improvement activities and linked to an annual quality cycle. The provider must use effective systems for engaging with the company's staff, learners, employers and sub contractors to gain their views and ensure effective contributions. Self-assessment must lead to the honest identification of strengths and weaknesses and be integrated with other management activities such as a robust staff appraisal system.

38 The process must lead to a self-assessment report which includes hard evidence and indicates where this is located. This, in turn, must be clearly linked to a development or action plan where all strengths and weaknesses are addressed systematically. Data for self-assessment should be collected throughout the year rather than just before the self-assessment report is due to be completed.

39 All staff must be encouraged to challenge the effectiveness of their own work, for example, in supporting learners. The provider must ensure that all staff contribute actively to the process and that they fully understand the purpose and outcomes of the self-assessment process, together with identifying relevant evidence. The process must also ensure that staff understand that their views are welcomed and valued.

40 The provider's quality assurance policy statement must set out clearly the inter-relationship between quality improvement and self-assessment.

Strengths

→ thorough and accurate self-assessment
→ thorough and inclusive self-assessment process
→ self-critical, realistic self-assessment report
→ effective monitoring and improvement of performance through on-going self-assessment and stakeholder review

Shortcomings

→ insufficiently critical self-assessment process
→ insufficient involvement of staff in self-assessment processes
→ insufficient involvement of employers and learners in self-assessment process
→ inadequate use of self-assessment to support improvement

Best practice

→ Providers should have an 'inclusive' self-assessment process that involves all involved in the training process – learners, staff, employers and other interested parties. This should be supported through good communication about the process of self-assessment and final report. For example, holding annual events to bring underlying evidence together to form judgements and gauge the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders.

→ All staff should be aware of the main 'headline' content of the current Self-Assessment Report (SAR), along with grades and the development plan.

→ The process must focus on gathering the sort of information needed to produce an effective action or development plan to improve provision.

→ There should be an effective link between the self-assessment and Quality Improvement Procedures so that the two cycles overlap and do not duplicate time and resources.

→ In the better SARs, providers focus on issues which will really make a difference to the experience of learners and make good use of the Common Inspection Framework (CIF) as the basis for the report.

→ To be effective in improving the quality of provision, the SAR must be honest in evaluating strengths, areas for improvement and areas of normal practice so that they can be maintained, eliminated and improved as necessary.

→ Good SARs make use of data, in a self-critical way, as a basis for making judgements and to provide an overview of performance in different areas, for example, retention rates, success rates and progression rates as well as results of feedback and observations.

→ The final SAR must be clear, concise and full of judgements, that includes references to relevant sources of evidence and makes grading decisions based on the 'weighting' of strengths, norms and areas for improvement and the overall experience of learners.

→ Where appropriate, providers should have SARs for each area that feed into the overall self-assessment report.

Case study

Best practice in the process of writing a self-assessment report

Careers Wales Mid Glamorgan and Powys' concise, analytical and evaluative self-assessment report enables the company to come to clear judgements about the quality and standards of its activities. Self-assessment focuses on the effectiveness of services to clients and clearly identifies areas for development. These areas for development link into the Quality Development Plan.

Staff at all levels contributed fully to writing the self-assessment report. The provider ran self-assessment workshops for staff at all levels in the company. The workshops included practice in writing evaluative statements and completing parts of the draft self-assessment report.

The first workshops were for new managers who then cascaded this training to their teams. Teams then wrote their input to the key questions and managers stressed the need for these to be evaluative statements.

Once all levels of the company had made their contributions to the key questions, the quality manager presented the report to the Board of Directors and the senior management team who then made their contributions. Finally, two 'critical friends' challenged a number of the statements at a senior management team meeting. All contributions were then drawn together into one document.

The resultant document is clear and easy to read and one to which all staff had contributed.

Case study

Departmental self-assessment reports feeding effectively into an overall work-based learning self-assessment report

At Coleg Llandrillo, the self-assessment process is fully embedded in work-based learning. Every department in work-based learning produces a team self-assessment report. The work-based learning manager then draws these all together into a work-based learning self-assessment report. This feeds into the college self-assessment report.

This process ensures that all members of the work-based learning team contribute to the work-based learning self-assessment report and ultimately the college self-assessment report.

2.2 Partnerships

41 Strong collaborative partnerships with industry and other external bodies enable effective promotion of vocational learning opportunities. They are particularly important where participation in post-16 education is poor, and there is a shortage of suitable recruits into employment and training. Effective communications between training providers, employers, colleges, schools and other stakeholders are the key to success.

42 Although partnership working is difficult to develop, identification of the benefits to employers is key to getting them on board. Training providers, working closely with employers can influence training to suit employers' needs, and benefit all parties. Developing close working links with schools and colleges can increase the number of potential learners into vocational education and training.

43 Formal and productive working relationships with sub contractors can be of great benefit to training providers. But any provider engaged in using a sub contractor must take effective measures to manage and quality assure its sub contracted provision. Barriers can be overcome to the mutual benefit of all concerned. To engage sub contractors in effective quality assurance management both parties must agree a set of quality standards and a service level agreement that aims to provide the best experience for learners. Ultimately the provider, as contract holder, has the overall responsibility for ensuring the learning experience of the learner.

Strengths

→ good use of collaborative partnerships to widen participation
→ productive partnerships that enhance the learner experience
→ effective communication with outside agencies
→ close working relationships with employers
→ good service level agreement with sub contractors
→ effective monitoring of sub contractors delivery

Shortcomings

→ insufficient collaborative partnership arrangements
→ ineffective partnership arrangements
→ ineffective communication with employers
→ insufficient involvement of employers
→ No effective service level agreement with sub contractors

Best practice

44 Providers should research what "networks" are available within the area in which they operate and join them. They should also ensure that the most appropriate member of staff attends network meetings in order to be able to take and influence decisions. Additionally, it is important to identify the relevant support agencies and community groups available to support learners. Good providers will often offer to host meetings on the provider's premises to help promote an awareness of the organisation among partners.

45 Effective partnerships require partners to work collaboratively to deliver programmes and progression opportunities. Therefore, all partners must understand what can be offered by each provider within the network to meet the training requirements of learners and make best use of the network to share best practice and quality improvement activities.

46 Providers should establish effective communication networks with all partners including sub contractors to benefit learners. They should also put in place and monitor effective service-level agreements with all sub contractors.

47 Good providers often establish employer forums to advise on and review new and existing training programmes, involve them in programme design and help them understand the programmes that their learners are on. They also use these forums effectively to systematically survey the views of employers.

48 Where good partnership arrangements exist all partners are updated about changes and developments, for example, to the apprenticeship framework, occupational standards and assessment regulations or changes at the provider.

Case study

Employer engagement

Coleg Menai has excellent, well-established, working partnerships with local employers and other statutory and voluntary agencies.

The provider has very clear and effective employer relationship procedures. Five work placement officers act as links between the college and employers. In addition, staff at all levels have regular links with employers.

The college responds very well to employer needs. This includes work with two large engineering employers to run group apprenticeship training to suit individual company needs. The engineering employers choose the NVQ units in the Foundation Modern Apprenticeship training and specify any additional courses they require. The employers help with the marketing and recruitment for the training places. Potential learners take an engineering aptitude test at interview. Two Foundation Modern Apprenticeship groups now run, specifically to meet the needs of each employer.

Individuals in the college link to each Sector Skill Council to keep abreast of national and local developments. College staff attend all relevant local Sector Skills Councils and employer groups. The college acts as a voice for the small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas and links them to the appropriate Sector Skill Council.

In partnership with engineering companies, the college has set up an engineering CAM (Canolfan Arloesi Menai) centre at Bangor. Local businesses use this to develop prototypes for their businesses. This raises awareness among businesses of the opportunities for apprenticeship training in the college.

Links with Careers Wales are strong and the provider works with this organisation very effectively to recruit work-based learners.

Case study

Effective partnerships with voluntary and statutory organisations in the community

Jobforce Wales has very good partnerships with a wide range of employers and relevant agencies in the voluntary and statutory sectors in the local community. They also have partnerships with local training providers with whom they share good practice.

The provider works with the Local Authority's 14-19 pathways network and provides a programme for the wider curriculum for school pupils who are 'at risk' of becoming disengaged from mainstream education in years 10 and 11. Learners carry out community fund raising, experience outdoor pursuits, undertake motivational training and gain useful qualifications such as the full range of key skills at level 1. A high proportion of learners on the programme progress onwards to relevant further education and training.

The quality development manager shares best practice and carries out peer observations for delivery of training to this age group in a local FE college.

The provider is also a member of the county adult learning partnership and contributes to the annual Adult Learners' Week activities. Other community activities by the provider include running money/debt management courses.

Liaison with employers is good and assessors make sure employers understand the programmes their learners are following and keep them up to date with any changes to the apprenticeship frameworks. The provider works with three employers who have signed up to the Employer Pledge initiative, to improve basic skills in the workplace.

To improve delivery of education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC), the provider is a member of the Carmarthenshire Environmental partnership and also works in partnership with an environmental centre in West Wales.

2.3 Bilingualism and Welsh culture

49 In general, learners in many parts of Wales do not have enough opportunities after leaving school to continue their learning in Welsh. Often, providers and learners do not have complete information about the qualifications that are available in Welsh nor the demand for them from employers. Providers are often not aware of what resources are currently available and where to find them.

50 More providers are promoting bilingualism and increasing opportunities for learners to come into contact with Welsh and improve their bilingual skills. More collaboration between providers is essential in order to extend Welsh-medium provision in a cost-effective way. Particularly in the case of providers who serve areas where the population is scattered and there are long distances between providers.

Strengths

→ effective Welsh language policy and procedures
→ comprehensive and well-implemented arrangements for bilingual provision
→ good monitoring of arrangements for bilingual provision
→ good promotion of bilingualism and the culture of Wales
→ effective use of data to monitor participation by learners through the medium of Welsh
→ good use of external organisations to continuously improve understanding of the benefits of bilingualism and promoting the Welsh culture

Shortcomings

→ incomplete written Welsh language policy and procedures
→ incomplete arrangements for bilingual provision
→ no clear strategic development for bilingual provision
→ ineffective analysis of data to monitor and evaluate participation by learners through the medium of Welsh
→ poor promotion of the culture of Wales and the benefits of bilingualism

Best practice

51 Providers should develop a Welsh ethos within the their organisation and produce a Welsh language scheme appropriate to the needs of the organisation. They should involve all appropriate staff, learners and stakeholders in drawing up a Welsh language policy and procedures, and in reviewing them to ensure they reflect the needs of learners, employers and the organisation. Good providers use data effectively to evaluate the effectiveness of Welsh language policies and procedures.

52 All staff must be fully aware of the policy and understand what they need to do to ensure that it is put into practice effectively. The provider must also ensure that all learners are fully aware of the rights the policy gives them and the responsibilities it places on them. The Welsh language policy should be backed up by appropriate implementation plans and procedures.

53 Good providers develop an ongoing staff development programme to improve the organisation's ability to deliver training through the medium of Welsh, involve staff in identifying and taking action to increase bilingual participation by learners and often design staff training in bilingualism to challenge and change attitudes.

54 To improve bilingual opportunities for learners, providers must increase the number of programmes available through the medium of Welsh and provide programmes and support that will enable progression for bilingual learners. Often this can be achieved in partnership with awarding bodies, other providers and through the development of existing resources.

55 Good providers will seek to develop learners' communication skills in Welsh. This can be achieved, for example, by setting up Welsh speaking social groups that meet outside the learner's programme of training, encouraging learners to speak Welsh in the workplace to Welsh speaking customers and engaging with community groups and involving them in training or in supporting bilingual learners.

56 The learner review process is often used by good providers to promote the culture of Wales and benefits of bilingualism to learners. For example, increased employment opportunities for learners within Welsh speaking communities.

57 To improve the recruitment of bilingual learners, providers should produce promotional brochures, prospectuses and websites bilingually which reflect the culture of Wales and make recruitment material available bilingually.

Case study

Outstanding bilingual training

At **Hyfforddiant Gwynedd** all aspects of training for Foundation Modern Apprenticeships, Modern Apprenticeships and Skillbuild are bilingual. Most staff are bilingual. Bilingual teaching sessions help bilingual learners confirm their understanding using both languages. In addition, these sessions help those learning Welsh to gain confidence in speaking Welsh.

Learners can take their whole qualification in either English or Welsh and a minority develop bilingual portfolios. The only constraint for these is that an individual unit must be in one language. Awarding body standards are bilingual and approved by the awarding body. Certificates for all qualifications are also bilingual, if required.

Very good bilingual materials support all bilingual learning. Provider's staff have developed these. For example, those for Childcare have Welsh and English on the same page but are displayed in different colours.

Case study

Good promotion and development of bilingualism

Hyfforddiant Môn has examples of very best practice in promoting the benefits of bilingualism. A learner in Health and Social Care produced a leaflet 'Two languages: twice the choice!'. Learners receive this at recruitment. It links the benefits of learning bilingually to a greater choice of jobs in the area. A bilingual employer newsletter promotes the advantages of bilingualism to employers.

Recently, the provider has appointed a bilingual champion and set up an enthusiastic working group who meet monthly to drive forward bilingualism. The provider has drawn up a programme of staff development to improve Welsh speaking and writing skills and to promote bilingualism.

Assessors make it clear to learners at recruitment and induction that they can carry out part of their learning through the medium of Welsh; this includes their key skills and progress reviews. Through effective monitoring the provider has noticed that more learners are now willing to express a preference to complete part of their training in Welsh. This gives learners the confidence to improve their Welsh skills, whereas previously they may not have specified Welsh as their preferred language of learning.

Case study

Good promotion of Welsh culture

Learners at **Yale College** receive a booklet on 'Welsh culture and language' at induction. This well-presented booklet gives information about the background to events, which are celebrated in Welsh culture, such as the Eisteddfod. It also gives background information on some of the symbols of Wales.

Learners have an action on their ILPs to complete the research in the booklet. This booklet broadens their understanding of the Welsh culture and develops important research skills. The booklet also promotes the Welsh language. It raises awareness about bilingualism in the workplace and encourages learners to develop their own Welsh language skills by finding out the meaning of Welsh words. Learners also receive guidance on how to further develop their Welsh language skills from the booklet.

Appendices

Appendix 1

The Learner Journey

During any learning programme learners travel through a series of recognised stages from entry to exit in what is known as the Learner Journey (figure 1).

The Learner Journey

- Recruitment
- Induction
- Initial assessment
- Learning Plans
- Teaching and Learning
- Progress Reviews
- Assessment
- Achievement
- Progression

	KQ1 Outcomes		KQ2 Provision				KQ3 Leadership			
	Standards	Wellbeing	Learning experiences	Teaching	Care, support and guidance	Learning environment	Leadership	Partnership working	Quality improvement	Resource management
Recruitment			√		√		√	√	√	√
Induction		√		√	√	√	√		√	
Initial assessment	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Learning plans	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	
Teaching and learning		√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
Progress reviews	√	√			√		√	√	√	
Assessment	√			√		√	√	√		√
Achievement	√					√	√		√	√
Progression	√	√			√		√		√	
Employer engagement	√	√	√		√	√		√	√	√