

SWITCH SELF-EVALUATION TOOLKIT FOR PARTNER PROVIDERS: PILOT VERSION

Why self evaluate?

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) describes self-evaluation as:

- A critical improvement tool
- Something which all providers should do and provide evidence for
- A key feature in the inspection and regulation of providers.

According to LSIS¹, self-evaluation should lead to improvements or to the maintenance of exceptional standards, and be a cyclical process. The primary purpose of self-assessment and improvement planning is to improve the quality of the learning experience and the outcomes for all learners, by supporting an organisation's development needs and measuring progress against its mission and goals. Self-assessment is a requirement of funding and should be:

- an essential part of a continuous review and improvement process;
- led by organisational needs informed by external requirements;
- rigorous, based on reliable, valid and up-to-date evidence – you must use data as the starting point for any judgement or grading;
- inclusive, with all members of the organisation contributing to the process and owning the actions for improvement;
- the basis of effective and continuous action plans which, when implemented, lead to improvements or maintain exceptionally high standards.

Successful improvement planning is outcome-focused. As you identify the cause of the problem and plan and manage the improvement actions, you can continuously evaluate your performance against what you have achieved and are achieving. Use a cyclical process of observing the action, evaluating the consequences of the action and making adjustments as needed.

According to Ofsted, good practice for rigorous improvement planning should include the following selected actions:

- Using national and local benchmarks and other comparative data.
- Internally and externally validating judgements and grades.
- Systematic use of learner and employer satisfaction data.
- Having regular access to and making effective use of robust and accessible management information.

Essential requirements

An annual self-assessment report (SAR) is the summarised written outcome of ongoing monitoring, review and improvement of provision. The learner journey can be used as a structure for the SAR and improvement plan, whilst covering all the requirements and key questions of the latest Common Inspection Framework (CIF).

¹ LSIS Self-assessment and Improvement Planning: a user guide for learning and skills providers. September 2009.

Ofsted's rating system from September 2009² will call for graded judgements from providers *with supporting evidence* on: overall effectiveness and value for money; capacity for improvement; leadership and management (especially diversity issues); and learner outcomes.

LSIS advises that providers consider developing their own performance indicators or balanced scorecard approaches which are fit for purpose for individual organisations. These should include how providers 'engage with learners, employers and communities and, most importantly, the impact of this engagement' and the actions taken as a result.

The importance of data and evidence

Any judgment made by any individual, department or team in the self-assessment report must be backed up by up-to-date, relevant data. The data used should relate to indicators selected for measurement purposes.

Data can be quantitative (eg learner success rates or numbers of employers engaged) or qualitative (eg feedback from learners throughout their learner journey), based on learners' satisfaction with provision and service. Time data should also be available to measure trends and longitudinal progress against indicators.

It is important to compare the data against any available benchmarks, and to ensure that it is validated. LSIS recommends that learner outcomes (including destinations and progression) are collected using a number of ways to gain learner views, which include surveys on key issues and focus groups. The latter should be linked to the learner's journey as well as mapped to the Common Inspection Framework, using the four point scale: 4 – outstanding, 3 – good, 2 – satisfactory, 1 – inadequate.

Surveys of learners' views carried out by the provider, Learning and Skills Council or other organisations provide additional evidence for the inspection, and may indicate themes for further exploration. Other first-hand evidence includes: discussions with learners and analysis of their work; analysis of provider records, documents and learner and employer questionnaires; and meetings with learners, employers, staff, governors and the provider's partners where appropriate.

Inspectors will use Framework for Excellence performance indicators (see below), when fully established, as a source of evidence to support inspection judgements. Where performance indicator outcomes relate directly to an evaluation statement in the CIF, it will be used as a source of evidence, for example, response to the learner survey, or value for money. Other examples of self-assessment systems and performance indicators are included in Annex A.

² Ofsted. Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills from September 2009.

Sample LSC Framework for Excellence Performance Indicators for 2009

CIF	Framework for Excellence Key Performance Indicators
1. Achievement and Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualification Success Rates
2. Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learner Views ▪ Learner Destinations ▪ Qualification Success Rates
3. Meeting the Needs of Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learner Views ▪ Learner Destinations ▪ Employer Views
4. Guidance and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learner Views ▪ Qualification Success Rates
5. Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualification Success Rates ▪ Delivery against Funding Allocation or Contract ▪ Resource Efficiency

Amongst other good practice observed in improving colleges, Ofsted has noted the following indicators for learners as drivers for improvement:

- ◆ Excellent and wide-ranging support for learners which meets their individual needs.
- ◆ A strong emphasis on monitoring and reviewing the progress of individual learners.
- ◆ A focus on improving the experience of individual learners so that they make substantial progress based on their prior attainment.
- ◆ Prominence given to the views of learners, with feedback provided to them.

On the flip side, poor data and data management were noted as barriers to improvement. In one college, to rectify this, data was made accurate, consistent and easily accessible. A centralised system was established to foster confidence by staff and appropriate training provided for understanding the data, active management and taking ownership. Communications barriers between management information systems and teaching staff were broken down and a collaborative approach to ensuring data validity introduced. Data analysis and interpretation have since become essential tools, enabling staff to be self-critical and accurate in their self-assessment and in measuring progress and improvement.

Feedback from this pilot

In the following section we present the existing SWitch ITT trainee survey that has been piloted successfully in SWitch partner institutions across sectors: further and higher education, work-based learning, personal and community learning, and the voluntary and community sector. We invite your feedback on what changes should be made to this survey instrument to reflect more practically the self-assessment needs of partner sectors, based on current use of other systems.

When going through the survey, please bear in mind your existing organisational capacity for data analysis. For example, you may feel that it will not be possible to correlate the personal background data requested in section 1 with trainees' other feedback on the course itself – and so this section would be superfluous to your needs. From the experience of previous surveys, however, we have found it useful to assess trainees' perceptions of work-life balance, for instance, against whether they are working part time or full time. Questions in Section 2 are factual and should be included as a minimum starting point for self-assessment.

The 'traffic light' points scoring system applies from questions in Section 3 onwards as these sections reflect trainees' individual perspectives on their courses. For ease of reference *for this pilot*, points to be scored for each response are indicated in brackets () after each option. Where you are asked to choose a value within a range (eg as in Question 4.1) please score this at face value (no other weighting is applied to the response). At the end of each section, add up the points accumulated to derive a score. Based on where the score sits within the range of answers, you will have scored as follows:

- Green** = Trainee feedback suggests systems are fit for purpose and working properly.
- Amber** = There are some grounds for concern in particular areas.
- Red** = Results indicate that further work is needed to ensure trainees' experiences are satisfactory.

It may be that you would give different scores to the responses. Please feel free to change these as long as this is done consistently, better meets your needs as a provider and reflects your trainees' individual circumstances.

Please tell us the following:

- ◆ How well do the questions cover and reflect trainees' concerns?
- ◆ How workable is the 'traffic light' system for identifying institutional strengths and weaknesses?
- ◆ What further customisation may be needed to make the Toolkit more relevant to your sector?
- ◆ Any other comments that you may have.

This survey is being conducted to capture the views of people on courses qualifying them to teach in further, adult or community education.

It focuses on the experience and satisfaction of teachers in training, with the processes of recruitment, initial assessment, induction and ongoing support.

The questionnaire has six short sections and should take around 20 minutes to complete.

Thank you for participating in this survey. Please write clearly using blue or black ink.

1. This section is about you

1.1 **Are you:** Male Female

1.2 **How old are you?:**

- 18-25 26-30 31-35 36-40 41-45 46-50
 50+

1.3 **Please tell us about your highest educational qualification before starting this course:**

- GCSEs NVQs A levels Diplomas (eg HND, BTEC)
 Professional or technical certificates Degree/Foundation Degree
 Postgraduate (eg Master's, PhD) Teaching qualifications None

Other (please add comments):

1.4 **How long has it been between starting your current course and your last education and training?**

- Currently studying for another qualification Within the last 12 months
 12-24 months ago 2-5 years ago 5-10 years ago Over 10 years ago

If you are studying full time, please proceed to the next section.

1.5 **Are you working at the moment?** Yes No

a) Are you employed full time on either a permanent or temporary contract?

b) Are you employed part time on either a permanent temporary or sessional contract?

c) Do you work at more than one job? Yes No

d) What are your contracted weekly hours? 0-10 11-20 21-30

31-40 40+

e) If you are not employed, are you: Self-employed or freelance Retired Not employed

Other (please add comments):

1.6 Where do you work? (please tick all that apply)

- Higher education institution Further education college Sixth form college
Work-based learning provider Adult and community learning provider
Private or voluntary sector learning provider

I work in another role (please state)

If you are working in a non-teaching role, please go to 1.10.

1.7 If employed as a teacher:

What type of teaching job/s do you have? (please tick all that apply)

- Lecturer (academic) Lecturer (vocational)
Trainer
Tutor (adult literacy, numeracy or language)
Tutor (study/support skills)
Tutor (special needs/disability) Assessor

Other (please state)

1.8 What age group/s do you teach? (please tick all that apply)

- 14-15 16-19 20-25 26-40 Over 40

1.9 What are your subject specialisms, if any? Please tell us below.

1.10 How long have you been employed in your current role?

- Under 12 months 12-24 months 2-5 years 5-10 years Over 10 years

Previous employment:

1.11 Have you been employed before in a different capacity? Yes No

2. This section is about your course

2.1 Is your course: Full time Part time

2.2 Where do you study? (please tick all that apply)

- College of further education University / college of higher education
 Adult and community learning centre Work-based training provider
 Private or voluntary sector provider Sixth form college

Other (please state)

2.3 Is one of these organisations your employer? Yes No

2.4 Please tell us which qualification you will get from your current course:

- PTLLS CTLLS DTLLS Cert Ed PGCE GPRLS

Other (please state)

2.5 How long have you been studying for this qualification?

- 1-4 weeks 5-8 weeks 9-12 weeks 3-6 months 6-12 months
 12-18 months 18-24 months Over 24 months

Other (please state)

2.6 When do you hope to complete your current training?

- 1-2 weeks 3-4 weeks 5-8 weeks 9-12 weeks 3-6 months
 6-12 months Over 12 months

3. This section is about your reasons for undertaking training

3.1 How did you first hear about this teaching qualification? (please tick all that apply)

- Employers (3) Tutors (1) Peers (2) Students (1) Friends (2)
 Family (2) College leaflets/Website (2) Press or media (1) Professional sources (2)

Other (please state)

3.2 What prompted you to enrol? (please tick all that apply)

- My employer needed it for me to keep my job (1)
 It is required by the profession for teachers of adults (1)
 My training will recognise years of practice/experience (2)
 It will enhance my job prospects for future work (3)
 I wanted to develop personally and professionally (3)

Other (please state)

Questions in the following sections include a number of statements that are based on 'real world' answers in the previous survey. Please tick all that may apply in your situation.

3.3 At the start of the course, which of the following statements describes your feelings? (please tick all that apply)

- I was looking forward with confidence to a good course (3)
 I was pleased to be training with my workmates in a familiar environment (2)
 It had been some while since I had trained but I felt I should do it (2)
 I didn't see why it was needed for someone with my experience (1)
 I would never have attended if my employers hadn't insisted (1)

Other (please state)

3.4 What were you looking forward to? (please tick all that apply)

- Getting back into training and study (3)
 Updating/broadening my practical teaching skills (3)
 Training alongside colleagues (2)
 Learning new theories and approaches (2)

- Being able to call myself a teacher (1)
- Widening job opportunities at the end of the course (2)

Other (please state)

3.5 What were you anxious about? (please tick all that apply)

- Getting back into training and study (2)
- Work life balance – finding time (3)
- Training alongside colleagues (2)
- Feeling as if I wouldn't measure up in certain areas (1)
- Time pressures re assignments, course paperwork (3)
- New challenges and techniques (1)
- Relevance to specific circumstances (1)

Other (please state)

Scoring for providers: How did you do?

Green = 15 and above
Amber = 8-14
Red = 7 and under

4. This section is about aspects of your course experience so far

4.1 Course recruitment: On a scale of 5: most positive and 1: most negative, how would you rate your experience?

- 1 2 3 4 5

4.2 How did your course recruitment go? (please tick all that apply)

- After I applied I was interviewed and offered a place (2)
- Information was available on funding, procedures, what to expect (3)
- Enrolment and registration were handled professionally (3)
- Talking to a knowledgeable member of staff helped (2)
- Once the course was proposed I had a 'fast track' offer (2)
- There was no one able to answer questions (1)
- I had to chase up responses at every stage (1)

Other (please state)

- 4.3 Initial assessment/s:** As you recall, did this involve some assessment of (please tick all that apply): IT (1) Maths (2) Literacy (3) English language (3)
 I did not have an assessment (1)

- 4.4 What were initial assessment procedures like?** (please tick all that apply)
 I knew the process from my own teaching and found no difficulty (3)
 Although I was rusty in some areas, it helped to identify my needs (2)
 I thought it was rushed and couldn't see why it was needed for a course of this level (1)
 It seemed pointless for someone with my background (1)
 It gave no extra information that would have been useful (1)

Other (please state)

- 4.5 Induction process:** : On a scale of 5: most positive and 1: most negative, how would you rate your experience?
1 2 3 4 5

- 4.6 How was the induction process onto the course?** (please tick all that apply)
 As I work at the institution, induction was unnecessary (1)
 Induction arrangements were well organised and gave us all the information needed (3)
 Tutors were properly briefed and able to answer most questions (3)
 There was too much paperwork without telling us why (1)
 Getting access to library and/or IT services was difficult (1)
 I found the process very confusing (1)
 No proper induction was available (1)
 I had to chase up information needed (1)

Other (please state)

- 4.7 How has support for you as a student worked out to date?**
Have you been assigned one or more of the following? (please tick all that apply)
 Mentor (1) Tutor (1) Study skills support professional (1)
 No support (0)

Please give one tick for each supporter assigned.

a) Have you been assigned specific support for your individual circumstances? (please state)(3)

b) How happy have you been with support received so far? (please tick all that apply)

- I was able to choose my own support which has worked out well (3)
- As my supporter is also a co-worker they know my strengths and weaknesses (3)
- I get regular and constructive feedback on a proactive basis (3)
- My supporter helps to encourage and motivate me (3)
- Support is available when I need advice or guidance (2)
- I haven't had contact with my supporter as yet (1)
- My supporter has a busy timetable and it's hard for us to meet (1)
- Support is rarely there as soon as needed (1)
- Most of my support comes from my course colleagues (2)
- I'm disappointed in my support which has been nonexistent (1)

Other (please state)

Scoring for providers: How did you do?

Green = 25 and above

Amber = 12-24

Red = 11 and under

5. This section is about the content of your course

5.1 Relevance: On a scale of 5: most positive and 1: most negative, how would you rate your experience?

- 1 2 3 4 5

5.2 How well has the course matched your own professional needs and expectations? (please tick all that apply)

- The course is covering all the areas that I will need (3)
- Certain areas of the course cover training I've already had but most is useful (2)
- It's introduced me to specific new practice, like reflective thinking (2)
- I've enjoyed learning background theory that helps with existing practice (2)
- I've been able to apply easily most of what I've already learned (3)
- Learning with others has made it more relevant (2)
- I've learned nothing new since starting the course (1)
- It's been a waste of time so far (1)

Other (please state)

5.3 Challenge: On a scale of 5: most positive and 1: most negative, how would you rate your experience?

- 1 2 3 4 5

5.4 Has the course up to now challenged your professional practice, assumptions or understandings? (please tick all that apply)

- Coursework so far has been about as expected (2)
- There's been a lot to take in and it hasn't all gone in yet (2)
- I've not done anything like this before and it's all new to me (2)
- Putting theory together with practice is a challenge (2)
- It makes me question why I do things instead of just doing them (3)
- It's taught me things about myself I didn't know before (3)
- The biggest challenge is getting through all the work (2)
- I haven't found the course to be at all challenging (1)

Other (please state)

Scoring for providers: How did you do?

Green = 18 and above
Amber = 10-17
Red = 9 and under

6 The manageability of your course and general comments

6.1 Manageability: On a scale of 5: most positive and 1: most negative, how would you rate your experience?

- 1 2 3 4 5

6.2 How well have you managed the practical demands of the course (e.g. structure, timetabling, pace of study requirements) so far? (please tick all that apply)

- I am used to studying and demands have not been a problem (3)
- Working and studying alongside each other has been hard to get used to (2)
- I have had excellent support at home which has helped (3)
- Work demands have made study difficult (2)
- Family or personal pressures have interfered with the course (2)
- Assignments have been clustered together which has made keeping up a challenge (1)
- Self-assessments and reflection take up too much time (1)

Other (please state)

6.3 Practicality: On a scale of 5: most positive and 1: most negative, how would you rate your experience?

1 2 3 4 5

How well have practical course requirements matched initial course information?

(please tick one box in answer to each of the questions below)

- a) Were attendance requirements as envisaged?
Greater (3) About the same (2) Lower (1)
- b) Was volume of study as expected?
Greater (3) About the same (2) Lower (1)
- c) Were types/frequency of assessments as anticipated?
Yes (3) No (1)
- d) Was support available as envisaged?
Greater (3) About the same (2) Lower (1)
- e) Was the level of coursework as anticipated?
Too high (1) About right (2) Easier (3)
- f) Was the paperwork as you expected it?
Greater (1) About the same (2) Lower (3)
- g) Was the pace of the course as anticipated?
Faster (3) About the same (2) Slower (1)
- h) Was initial information about the time requirements accurate?
Yes (3) No (1)

Scoring for providers: How did you do?

Green = 30 and above
Amber = 15-29
Red = 14 and under

6.4 One thing you could change or do differently:

6.5 What are your future plans?

6.6 Are there any other comments you might have about your course or the experience of being a teacher in training?

MASTER SCORING FOR PROVIDERS (add up all the scores at the end of sections)

Scoring for providers: How did you do?

- Green** = 88 and above – well done! – your achievements rate as good practice
- Amber** = 42-87 – satisfactory; some improvements would be useful
- Red** = 41 and under – more work is needed on your trainees' experiences

SAMPLE SELF-ASSESSMENT AND 'TRAFFIC LIGHT' SYSTEMS

LSIS User Guide to Self-assessment and Improvement Planning – sources of data and evidence

Evidence source
Learner success and achievement (whether timely if appropriate)
Learner retention
Learner attendance
Learner cause for concern records/discipline records
Learner destinations
Learner value added and/or distance travelled
Learner satisfaction
Compliments and complaints from all sources
Employer outcomes – including impact on businesses
Employer satisfaction
Satisfaction, other groups, for example parents, visitors, community representatives
External verifier and examiner reports
Internal verifier reports
Grades and comments from observations (of teaching, training and learning, of tutorials, of other activity)
Staff CPD records, including impact and use made of CPD
Staff satisfaction
Audit reports
Health and safety reports
Reports on safeguarding of vulnerable adults
Reports on implementation of the Every Child Matters outcomes
Minutes of meetings (NB – if you can, indicate outcomes and impact not just that the meetings happened)
Learner data by category of learner – comparisons made
Policies and processes in place (NB – if you can, indicate outcomes and impact not just that they are in place)
Outcomes related to previous years or other periods (trends)
Outcomes related to other providers or to internal benchmarks (benchmarks)
Outcomes against targets
Case studies of learners, employers, community involvement and learning
Good news stories

LSIS Good Practice in Using Information

Do you ...	Always	Partly	Never
Have available up-to-date data on learner progress, outcomes and destinations?			
Have available up-to-date data on learner, employer and employee satisfaction rates?			
Have available up-to-date data on the quality of teaching, training and learning?			
Have a clear annual cycle for providing this data?			
Have clear roles for all involved in providing and using data?			
Ensure trainers and assessors have available relevant information?			
Ensure trainers and assessors use relevant information, individually and in teams?			
Review how you manage data so that it becomes useful information?			
Link information on quality to business planning and development planning?			
Ensure other staff use relevant information, individually and in teams?			
Use information to evaluate your provision and its effectiveness? (Not just to describe them)			
Use benchmarks?			
Analyse trends?			
Set improvement targets in clear and widely understood figures?			
Monitor information on improvements and take action to ensure progress and celebrate successes?			

LSIS: Sample Benchmarking / 'Traffic Light' system for self-assessment

ACTIONS	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Self-assessment			
Review OfSTED and other guidance on self-evaluation	SP	31-Jul-09	Green
Review OfSTED and other guidance on improvement planning	SP	31-Jul-09	Green
Register for alerts	TJ	31-Jul-09	Green
Establish checklist to help you review your self-assessment systems/processes	RD	31-Jul-09	Green
Schedule self-assessment awareness session for staff	TJ	15-Sep-09	Green
Deliver self-assessment awareness sessions to staff	BP	30-Sep-09	Amber
Confirm everyone who is involved in self-assessment is aware of the tools and the policy links in this Guide	SP	30-Sep-09	Amber
Confirm all provision is included in SAR	SP	30-Sep-09	Green
Complete checklist to ensure all key elements are included in SAR	RD	15-Oct-31	Amber
Improvement Plans			
Induction Plan	MT		
Review Induction Plan	MT	15-Sep-09	Green
Gather Learner Feedback	MT	20-Sep-09	Amber
Evaluate Learner Feedback	MT	25-Sep-09	Red
Revise Induction Plan	MT	31 Sep 09	Red
Staying Safe in the Classroom	DG		
Identify safety problem	DG	01-Oct-09	Green
Determine root cause of safety problem	DG	05-Oct-09	Amber
Resolve safety problem	DG	10 Oct 09Oct	Red

EXAMPLE: Red, Amber, Green rating (for sample LSC Common Inspection Framework performance indicators):

Green > Aspect has improved or been maintained as outstanding

Amber > Aspect has stayed the same

Red > Aspect has declined, but is not necessarily inadequate

Examples of learner-centred approaches (Source: LSIS Excellence Gateway)

a. The Learner’s Journey and the Common Inspection Framework

Measuring up – the learner’s journey and the Common Inspection Framework							
	KQ1 How well do learners achieve	KQ2 How effective are teaching, training and learning?	KQ3 How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?	KQ4 How well are learners guided and supported?	KQ5 How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	Equal Opportunities How well is equality of opportunity promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential?	Quality Improvement How effectively is performance monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment?
 Recruitment							
 Induction							
 Initial assessment							
 Learning plans							
 Teaching and learning							
 Progress reviews							
 Assessment							
 Achievement							
 Progression							

b. Self-assessment – the Learner-Centred Approach

