

# NTP Quality Management Framework

## Quality Standards and Assessment Guidance

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## Introduction

The NTP Quality Management Framework consists of the Quality Standards that Skills Development Scotland (SDS) contractually require training Providers to work towards in order to demonstrate excellence in delivery of Modern Apprenticeships, Foundation Apprenticeships and Employability Activity. Regardless of the type or size of the organisation, there is a need for each organisation to establish their own management framework in order to be successful. The SDS Framework enables Providers to:

- Use the SDS Framework as a benchmark to determine how any quality accreditation and certification already held can be used as evidence against the SDS Quality Standards;
- Establish how the management framework in place provides evidence for use in the Self Assessment;
- Identify which Success Indicators are relevant to their organisation and delivery model;
- Understanding their strengths and identifying potential gaps in how they deliver training in order to assess where they are in relation to continuous improvement
- Introduce a common language and way of thinking that facilitates effective communication both internally and externally;
- Integrate existing and planned initiatives, identifying duplication and potential gaps;
- Use the Framework to provide a foundation to measure achievement and sustain excellence in the delivery of training.

The SDS Quality Framework promotes the use of self assessment to review the Provider's delivery of apprenticeships and employability activity and continuous evaluation of the organisations development.

Through self assessment the Provider can measure their strengths under each of the main standards and identify areas for improvement or where they want to enhance their business. Completion of the Self Assessment (SA) should be an inclusive co-ordinated approach, with the Provider engaging their staff in the collation of relevant information and evidence ensuring that sufficient time is allocated so that the completed Self Assessment accurately reflects how the organisation runs. Gaps identified in how the Provider meets the Standards should be detailed in their Quality Action Plan (QAP). Skills Investment Advisors will discuss ongoing progress of their QAP and continuous improvement with the Provider through their quality monitoring role.

The updated SDS Standards incorporate Equality and Diversity requirements and captures the commitment Providers are making to ensure Apprenticeships and other learning is accessible to individuals from all backgrounds and delivery is flexible and adaptable in order to meet the individual needs of all learners. Providers should focus attention on taking action to broaden participation by individuals from the four Key Target Groups set out in the Equality Action Plan for Modern Apprenticeships. Target groups consist of disabled people, those from ethnic minority communities, care experienced people and also addresses gender segregation in MA frameworks where it exists.

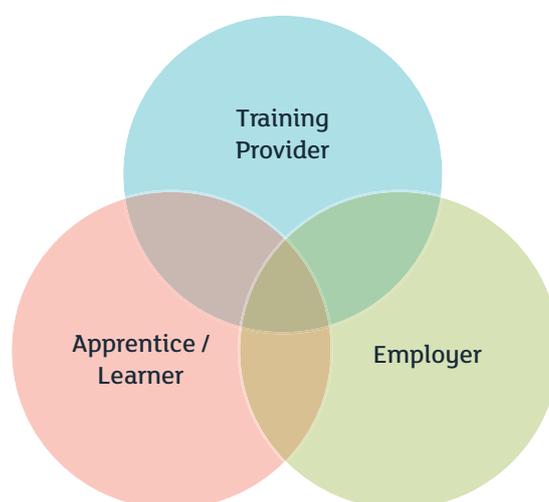
For information Appendix 5 maps the updated SDS standards to both the previous SDS Standards and European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) as well as Education Scotland Quality Indicators. This will help Providers carry over information from their earlier Self Assessments and track the progress they have made against EFQM if they are working towards the EFQM recognition of excellence.

## Quality Scotland links

SDS is a Quality Scotland member and has obtained support and guidance from them during the review of the Quality Standards. SDS Quality Standards are based on the EFQM approach as a widely used and recognised model. Ongoing consultation will be undertaken with Quality Scotland prior to the full roll out of revised SDS Quality Standards to ensure we have retained the robustness i.e robustness of the EFQM approach within the SDS Quality Management Framework.

## Purpose and aims of standards

The standards provide a methodology of measuring how well Providers are committed to continually improving their delivery of training to meet the needs of Apprentices and learners and the needs of employers as well as the interaction with Partners and other Stakeholders. SDS will seek assurance through formal Quality Assessment on how well Training Providers demonstrate how they meet the standards. An overview of the Quality Standards and Indicators is shown at Appendix 1.



The Quality Standards **create opportunities for training Providers** to:

- Evaluate their strengths and results achieved in delivery of training by using a single framework;
- Build on the results from assessment against the Quality Standards to develop and improve delivery of training and support to those that use the service;
- Stand out in the market of training provision available to employers by demonstrating their organisation's strengths and capability to achieve and maintain high standards of quality;
- Secure and retain the involvement of employers and other stakeholders through demonstrating high quality provision;
- Promote their ability to deliver high quality training and achieve successful outcomes for all learners, including those from diverse backgrounds;
- Encourage engagement of staff in the completion of the SA and take ownership of improvement actions.

The Quality Standards are designed to **support the success of Apprentices and Learners** by assuring they:

- Receive appropriate support and guidance is provided to enable them to become successful learners and confident individuals;
- Receive the necessary training to achieve their aims and objectives;
- Are treated with dignity and respect in a way that promotes equality in outcomes

- regardless of protected characteristics, including those who are care experienced;
- Work towards successful outcomes leading to future employment or further appropriate career progression in:
  - Employment
  - Further/higher education;
  - Learning pathways

The Quality Standards have been developed around **employers** by:

- Ensuring Providers take account of employers needs when offering training and development options to address industry needs;
- Creating a quality mark that highlights the best training provision available and help employers to select the Training Provider that demonstrates the best fit for their organisation;
- Encouraging providers to continuously improve, enabling them to offer more flexible and relevant training tailored to employer's needs.

## What the Guidance Document Contains

This document is designed to help providers understand the key ingredients in delivering high quality training services and what it takes to achieve successful outcomes through the ongoing development and delivery of high quality training. The guidance includes key information relating to the Quality Management Framework:

- Process and schedule of Self Assessment submissions
- Quality Standards and Success Indicators
- Quality Assessment
- Methodology used for assessments
- Quality Action Plan and Follow Up

## The Process and Schedule of Submissions

The Provider will submit a completed Self Assessment (SA) and associated Quality Action Plan (QAP) to SDS on an annual basis to SDSQualityAssurance@sds.co.uk. Submissions will be reviewed by an accredited EFQM Assessor and will form the basis of the formal Quality Assessment.

The formal Quality Assessment will be undertaken within a 3 year cycle (actual frequency determined by SDS) and the process will normally take three days. The EFQM accredited Assessor will be accompanied by Skills Investment Advisors or Development Delivery Executives as part of the Quality Team who will undertake interviews, observations and review of documentation as determined by the Assessor.

Training Providers should work towards the Standards and be confident their own assessment accurately reflects the organisation and the quality of their delivery with a view to securing contracts and continuous partnerships.

To produce a robust self assessment the Provider should confirm the statements made are supported by evidence including documented feedback from all relevant parties and reflects the delivery of all programmes and sectors.

SDS Quality Assessors will work with Providers as required;

- to offer guidance on the Standards and Framework to new providers;
- to assist all providers to understand the SDS Quality Standards providing advice on how to complete their Self Assessment;
- to provide advice on the types of evidence required to support their Self Assessment;
- to help identify areas for improvement and offer guidance on what can be done to develop improvement actions in order to meet individual standards.

Skills Investment Advisors (SIAs) and Development Delivery Executives (DDEs) for FA will offer ongoing support to Providers to ensure that:

- priority areas for improvement, as identified in the Provider QAP, are progressing as planned
- Providers are continually reviewing their SA and QAP with a view to improving the training they provide for apprentices and learners using the quality framework
- all additional areas for improvement recommended, during a Quality Assessment or SIA/ DDA quality monitoring visit, are included in the QAP; and
- all completed actions are reflected by the Provider in their updated SA.

## The Quality Standards

What we do	What we achieve
Key Enablers	Key Results
Leadership and Management	Leadership and Staff Results
Planning and Delivery of Training	Learner and Provider Results
Partnership and Resources	Partnership Results

*The Quality Standards are set out as three enabler standards and three results standards.*

*Enablers are the actions taken by the Provider, the strategies, operating plans, policies and processes in place and the people who are involved, both within and outwith the organisation. The activities demonstrate the communication of information across the organisation, who is responsible for carrying out different tasks, and what action is taken to support learning and delivery of training.*

*Results show how the Provider is performing in relation to the strategies, targets and objectives they have set out in their operating plans. They detail Continuous Improvement by providing trends over three year periods and demonstrating how partners and stakeholders needs have been met effectively.*

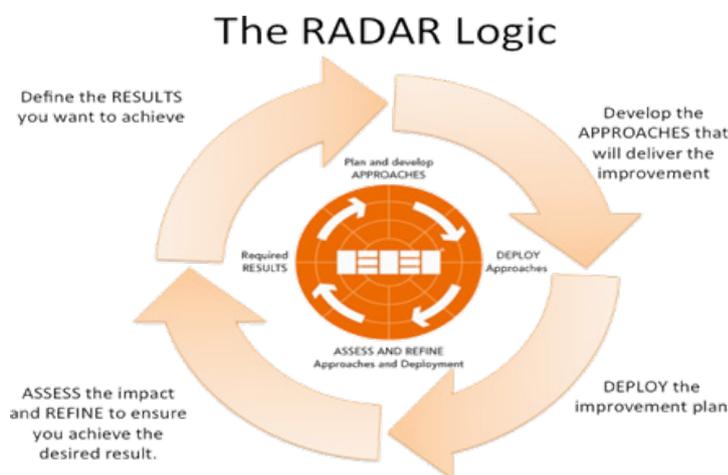
Appendix 2 details the Quality Standards and corresponding Quality Indicators that the Provider should self assess against. Individual Success Indicators provide guidance on what is expected under areas that the Provider has identified as relevant to the programme/s they deliver. The robustness of the evidence held will demonstrate how fully the Provider is able to meet the Standards.

Also included in appendix 2 are a number of Discussion Questions. These can be used by providers to help them engage with members of staff, partners and stakeholders to allow them to gather the information needed. This can encourage discussion, improve understanding, challenge approaches and help capture relevant information within the SA in support of appropriate Success Indicators and identify further development that may be required.

## Quality Assessment and Follow on Action

SDS has a robust assessment process within the SDS Quality Framework that consists of:

- A review of the Providers SA and QAP submitted to SDS at least annually;
- Identifying gaps within SA and QAP submitted to SDS where the Provider has not shown how they meet the Standard;
- A formal Quality Assessment visit, in line with the assessment schedule in Appendix 4, to review and test the robustness of the information and evidence referred to within the SA and QAP;
- Undertaking interviews of apprentices, learners, staff and employers to validate details recorded in the SA;
- Observations of methods and practice used in training delivery to verify references in SA;
- Placing reliance on accreditation and formal verification visits undertaken by Awarding Bodies;
- Taking account of any other quality accreditation and certification held by the Provider;
- Agreement of any additional Areas for Improvement with the Training Provider for inclusion in their QAP;
- A review of findings and calculation of score/grades using RADAR – see diagram below;
- A written report summarising the assessment findings, points of discussion and the final outcome, including the score band and overall grade;
- Ongoing support and review by an SDS SIA or DDE on progress of QAP content;
- Undertaking moderation to ensure consistency in approach across assessments.



## Quality Assessment Visit and Reporting

The formal Quality Assessment visit will be undertaken by a Quality Assessment Team that will validate areas of strength identified by the EFQM Assessor from the SA submitted by each Training Provider. Areas for improvement or enhancement identified during the assessment will be highlighted to the Provider on conclusion of the visit during a verbal feedback followed by a written Summary of Findings.

Findings from the visit will be collated by the Assessor and used to inform the scores allocated against each Quality Standard using EFQM RADAR methodology i.e. define results, review approach, establish if deployed, determine how assessed and refined.

[www.efqm.org/success-stories/radar-the-efqms-management-tool](http://www.efqm.org/success-stories/radar-the-efqms-management-tool)

An overall score and grade is awarded that represents the quality of training delivery at the time of assessment. This will be subject to discussion and agreement by the assessment team after which the Assessor will prepare a written report for issue. The report will detail the strengths, best practice, feedback gathered and areas for improvement or enhancement against each Standard for use by the Provider in working towards ongoing continuous improvement and inclusion in their QAP.

## Quality Action Plan and Follow Up

SIA's and/or DDEs will work with Providers on an ongoing basis to track their progress against their QAP. This will include the progress of any areas added to the QAP following the SIA/DDE Quality Monitoring visits. The SIA/DDE will verify that completed areas for improvements and enhancements are reflected in the updated SA for subsequent assessment visits.

The formal assessments will be scheduled over a three year period depending on the overall quality score calculated and grade awarded. A typical visit timetable is detailed in Appendix 4.

Regular Quality Monitoring will be carried out by the SIA or DDE and information collated will feed into future formal assessments.

## External Support

The Quality Management Framework is supplemented by themed reviews undertaken by Education Scotland, supported by SDS Associate Assessors, on agreed frameworks and timescales appropriate to SDS contractual arrangements.

# Quality Standards and Individual Quality Indicators Overview - Appendix 1

## Enablers - Activity

1. Leadership and Management	2. Planning and Delivery of Training	3. Partnerships and Resources
<p>1.1 Leaders have a clear mission, vision and values for the organisation.</p> <p>1.2 Leaders take responsibility for the development and delivery of the Provider’s training services taking account of the internal and external environment.</p> <p>1.3 Leaders ensure that the organisation is flexible and responsive to the needs and expectations of learners and employers.</p> <p>1.4 Leaders actively encourage continuous improvement through self-evaluation and internal review activities.</p> <p>1.5 The Provider is effective in recruiting, selecting and retaining the right quality of staff.</p> <p>1.6 The Provider has effective workforce planning and development for staff involved in training delivery.</p> <p>1.7 The Provider ensures productive working relationships between staff, learners, partners and employers are in place.</p>	<p>2.1 The Provider plans to deliver training services to achieve the aims, objectives and targets within their operational plans.</p> <p>2.2 The Provider engages with learners to ensure their needs are met and develops and delivers programmes and services to meet the needs of learners from all backgrounds.</p> <p>2.3 The Provider takes proactive steps to increase participation from disabled young people, minority ethnic backgrounds or care experienced and to address occupational segregation by gender.</p> <p>2.4 The Provider engages with employers to ensure their needs are met.</p> <p>2.5 The assessment process is used to promote effective learning.</p>	<p>3.1 The Provider has appropriate partnerships in place.</p> <p>3.2 The Provider manages and uses its resources and learning environment for the benefit of learners and employers.</p> <p>3.3 The Provider ensures contracting arrangements are in place with all partners.</p>

## Results – Outcomes

4. Leadership and Staff Results	5. Learner and Provider Results	6. Partnership Results
<p>4.1 The Provider makes effective use of their results to measure continuous improvement.</p> <p>4.2 The Provider meets the needs of staff through effective engagement in setting and achieving objectives.</p> <p>4.3 The staff are actively involved in planning to improve and develop services.</p> <p>4.4 Staff relations and communications are effective.</p>	<p>5.1 The training programmes and services are accessible, flexible and inclusive to meet learner needs and support successful learning.</p> <p>5.2 Recruitment is reflective of local demographics for the SDS Equality and Diversity Key Target Groups.</p> <p>5.3 Learners make planned progress and achieve recognised outcomes.</p> <p>5.4 The Provider achieves its aims objectives and targets to maintain high levels of trainee retention, progression and outcomes.</p>	<p>6.1 The programme and services meet the skills needs and expectations of employers.</p> <p>6.2 The programmes and services meet the needs of other stakeholders.</p>

Quality Standards and Indicators	Success Indicators	Discussion Questions
<b>ENABLERS</b>		
<p><b>1. Leadership and Management</b></p>	<p><i>Excellent Training Providers have leaders who set a clear direction and demonstrate an understanding of their commitment to the learners and employers. They are flexible, enabling them to anticipate and react in a timely manner to ensure the continuing success of the organisation and ensure the support provided and training delivered is suitable for the needs of all learners and employers. Excellent Training Providers value their people and create a culture that allows the mutually beneficial achievement of organisational and personal goals. They develop the capabilities of their people and promote fairness and equality.</i></p>	
<p><b>1.1 Leaders have a clear mission, vision and values for the organisation.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a mission, vision and values in place which is communicated with staff throughout the organisation.</li> <li>• Clear and comprehensive aims, objectives and targets that meet learner needs and employer and expectations is established and documented. (SMART)</li> <li>• The Training Provider’s aims, objectives and targets are cascaded to staff so that they understand them and are aware of what commitment is required of them.</li> <li>• Well developed communication systems are in place to ensure the staff are conversant with the services and feel involved with planning, delivery and development.</li> <li>• Formal commitment to Equality and Diversity (E and D) for staff and learners is clearly demonstrated within the strategic plan and cascaded to staff.</li> <li>• A culture is developed that supports diversity within the workplace and learning environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does our mission and vision reflect our approach to training delivery?</li> <li>• How well do we communicate our mission, vision and values internally and externally?</li> <li>• Is the staff aware of the mission, vision and values and understand how their roles fit?</li> <li>• Are we the leaders visible and available to all staff? Is there an Open Door Policy?</li> <li>• How well are local, regional and national priorities taken into account when developing strategies?</li> <li>• How effective is our communication systems and do staff feel involved?</li> <li>• How effective are we as Leaders in demonstrating a practical commitment towards embracing diversity?</li> </ul>

## 1.2 Leaders take responsibility for the development and delivery of the Provider's training services taking account of the internal and external environment.

- The Directors and senior managers of the Training Provider assume overall responsibility for the planning, delivery and development of the training services, embedding equality and diversity and Quality Assurance.
- Leaders are responsible for ensuring they have effective business and operational systems and recruitment of sufficiently qualified staff.
- There are strategic and operating plans, objectives and targets in place and these reflect local, regional and national strategic policy drivers.
- Individual staff members job roles, objectives and targets are directly related to the strategic and operating plans.
- Strategies are in place for improving delivery of training, learning, retention, achievement and attainment.
- Strategies are in place for empowering, motivating and developing training staff.
- The provider has current policies, procedures, and business systems supporting all aspects of the training provision including security of records that meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act.
- Well developed communication systems are in place to ensure the staff are conversant and involved with planning, delivering and developing the services.
- Risk assessment and contingency plans are in place to ensure the service is delivered.
- Business planning tools e.g. SWOT and PEST analyses are used to review the internal and external environment.
- Strategies are in place for continuous engagement with key stakeholders to further develop partnerships to support upscaling of the programme.
- How do we identify key sectors that we want to / are able to deliver?
- How well do we use labour market intelligence such as Regional Skill Assessments and Skills Investment Plan to inform and shape our delivery?
- What activities are we involved in to engage with different sectors?
- How effective are we at ensuring Quality Assurance is managed on an ongoing basis?
- Do we set the staff relevant objectives and targets?
- How effective are our strategies and plans for delivery of training and how often do we review and update our objectives and targets?
- Do our strategic and operating plans address all aspects of our training services planning, delivery and development? E&D\*\*
- Is our approach to staff training successful in developing staff?
- How do we ensure everyone is aware of Data Protection requirements?
- Are our communication systems effective?
- How robust are our current policies, procedures and business systems?
- Do we manage risk effectively and implement mitigating actions and how often are they reviewed?
- Do we make effective use of business planning tools e.g. SWOT and PEST analysis to review the internal and external environment?

<p><b>1.3 Leaders ensure that the organisation is flexible and responsive to the needs and expectations of learners and employers.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A positive approach to innovation is embraced.</li> <li>• Internal and external drivers can be evidenced and responses are appropriate.</li> <li>• Regular reviews of processes and results are undertaken to ensure the organisation meets the needs of the learners and employers.</li> <li>• Effective communication methods, including regular surveys, are in place for learners, employers, staff and partners.</li> <li>• The staff keep up to date with sector developments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well do staff work with external agencies to enable learners to access additional services to support learning?</li> <li>• How effective are our learner, employer, partner and staff feedback/survey arrangements and do we make use of the findings?</li> <li>• Do we have examples of flexibility and responsiveness in how effective we are in meeting needs of learners and employers?</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.4 Leaders actively encourage continuous improvement through self-evaluation and internal review activities.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous improvement plans, including priority areas for improvement are in place and acted upon.</li> <li>• Appropriate review processes are in place to monitor implementation and measure the impact of improvements.</li> <li>• Staff, learners and employers are engaged in the process of continuous improvement and evaluation and are positively encouraged to suggest ideas and improvements.</li> <li>• Provider holds or is working towards quality awards e.g. EFQM, PSIF, IIP, ISO, 6 Sigma or other award such as Stonewall Diversity Champions; Investor in Diversity; or other E&amp;D kitemark</li> <li>• Improvement and success are shared and celebrated.</li> <li>• Continuous improvement and internal review are standard meeting agenda item.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well do we provide strategic support and challenge to secure high quality provision and ongoing improvement?</li> <li>• Do we successfully capture the results from our improvement plans in our Self Assessment and Action Plan?</li> <li>• Are we effectively monitoring improvement plans and who is involved in the process.</li> <li>• What audit and review arrangements do we have and do the results feed into Continuous Improvement Plans?</li> <li>• Do we successfully engage with staff, learners and employers to influence and contribute to improvements to services and support?</li> <li>• How are the customers – learners, employers, partners and staff encouraged to suggest ideas and improvements and are the methods effective?</li> </ul>

<p><b>1.5 The Provider is effective in recruiting, selecting and retaining the right quality of staff.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust recruitment and HR policies and processes which promote equality opportunities are in place.</li> <li>• A robust staff review and appraisal system is in place.</li> <li>• There is a system in place to monitor staff retention and turnover in line with the industry.</li> <li>• Job roles are clear and staff are aware of their responsibilities.</li> <li>• Staff have appropriate level and currency of qualifications.</li> <li>• Staff have appropriate and relevant experience.</li> <li>• Staff are encouraged to take responsibility and suggest ideas and improvements.</li> <li>• Staff understand the benefits of diverse teams and value different perspectives.</li> <li>• Staff suggested ideas and improvements are discussed and actioned when appropriate. Feedback is provided in all cases.</li> <li>• Staff take part in satisfaction surveys at least annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is our recruitment policy in place successful to help secure a diverse and stable workforce and reduce staff turnover?</li> <li>• How and when do we review our HR policies and procedures?</li> <li>• How do we know that staff are aware of their responsibilities?</li> <li>• Is the record of staff qualifications maintained providing details of any updates staff require?</li> <li>• How well do our Continuous learning arrangements support staff to deliver improvements to learning and teaching?</li> <li>• Are our staff evaluations carried out and do we address the results?</li> <li>• Are we successful in motivating our staff?</li> <li>• Are we aware of the impact of bias in the recruitment process?</li> <li>• Do we understand how a diverse workforce can benefit our organisation in terms of delivering training?</li> <li>• Do we collect and analyse staff equality monitoring data and use as evidence to take positive action?</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.6 The Provider has effective workforce planning and development for staff involved in training delivery.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders closely monitor the staff workloads and deployment to ensure the training services and business needs continue to be delivered effectively and workloads remain manageable and all areas relating to the contract are fully resourced.</li> <li>• An organisational development plan is in place which clearly sets out how immediate and future staff training needs will be met including equal opportunities.</li> <li>• A staff development programme is in place directly related to the business and operational plan objectives but can change in response to emerging opportunities.</li> <li>• Leaders should have in place contingency plans to meet changes to training delivery needs...</li> <li>• Arrangements to avoid discrimination and promote equality are established.</li> <li>• The business case for diversity is understood widely across the organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we have the right level of staff in terms of numbers, deployment and skills?</li> <li>• How do we demonstrate that our SDS contract is fully resourced?</li> <li>• Are we effective in managing our staff development and training in line with our strategic priorities future skill needs?</li> <li>• Do we maintain a plan to review our staff workloads, deployment and training at appropriate intervals?</li> <li>• Do we encourage staff to improve their own and other people's diversity related awareness, knowledge and skill?</li> </ul>

<p><b>1.7 The Provider ensures productive working relationships between staff, learners, partners and employers are in place.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are regular team or progress and review meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o among staff</li> <li>o between staff and learners</li> <li>o between Training Provider and partners</li> <li>o between Training Provider and employers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Staff are required to carry out frequent assessments and reviews to ensure the learners and employers are fully supported.</li> <li>• Staff are encouraged to support the learners and employers using the appropriate range of communication methods available e.g. face to face, meetings, courses, workshops, phone, messaging, email, e-portfolio, social media and website.</li> <li>• The learners, employers and stakeholders are frequently surveyed to ensure customer satisfaction is maintained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we record team meetings and log actions required/taken?</li> <li>• How well do we engage with staff, the learners and stakeholders to improve outcomes?</li> <li>• Do our customers think we have productive working relationships? Do we measure this?</li> <li>• How effective is the support provided to learners and employers? Do we compare success of different methods used?</li> <li>• Are our customers aware of the assessment, review and support activities available?</li> <li>• How do we make use of results from surveys?</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Planning and Delivery of Training</b></p>	<p><i>Excellent Training Providers build the delivery of their training contract into their organisational plans capturing the aims and objectives and details of how they will deliver training relevant to the needs of all learners and employers they engage with. Excellent Training Providers design, manage and improve processes, programmes and services to generate high quality training for learners and other stakeholders.</i></p>	
<p><b>2.1 The Provider plans to deliver training services to achieve the aims, objectives and targets within their operational plans.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Operational Plan in place aligns with the Organisations mission, vision and values.</li> <li>• The operating plan captures the requirements for training delivery ensuring the needs of learners from all backgrounds are fully included.</li> <li>• The objectives and targets are aligned to the strategic and operating plans and the requirements of the awarding and funding bodies.</li> <li>• Staff are conversant with the strategic and operating plans and fully involved in planning the training services delivery.</li> <li>• A formal planning system and timetable is in place recording details by sector.</li> <li>• Plans and associated actions and targets are communicated to training staff.</li> <li>• Training staff are clear how to implement plans to achieve targets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How effective is our plan for the delivery of our training services?</li> <li>• Is the approach in place to deliver aims and objectives effective for all sectors delivered?</li> <li>• How do we measure and compare achievement of targets for individual sectors?</li> <li>• Have we aligned our objectives and targets to the requirements of the framework specifications?</li> <li>• Do we take account of local and national policy and strategic drivers including Labour Market information when identifying sectors to work within?</li> <li>• How relevant are the objectives and targets?</li> <li>• Do we take the views of the customers and awarding and funding bodies into account when planning?</li> <li>• Have we successfully managed the involvement of the staff?</li> </ul>

## 2.2 The Provider engages with learners to ensure their needs are met and develops and delivers programmes and services to meet the needs of learners from all backgrounds.

- All prospective learners are provided with sufficient advice and guidance to ensure that they enrol on the appropriate course.
  - Relevant information including Equality and Diversity commitments and support is provided via Marketing, Recruitment, IA, Induction, ITP, Assessments and Reviews.
  - Learners are encouraged to contact their assessor/ reviewer when they require help.
  - Learners are encouraged to use the full range of communication methods including e-technology.
  - Arrangements are in place for learners to set goals and reflect on the learning received.
  - The Provider encourages the development of independence in learning.
  - Learner progress is closely monitored to ensure their needs are fully met and suitable support is provided to promote a successful learning experience and progression.
  - The Provider ensures all learners have access to and use of the services available to enhance their learning.
  - A Comments and Complaints Procedure is in place for learners use.
  - Learners are surveyed on a regular basis and the feedback is evaluated and actioned if appropriate.
  - New learning materials and courses continue to be developed to enhance the provision.
  - The Provider promotes equality and diversity for its entire workforce and customers.
  - Plans and processes are in place to meet the needs of specific groups.
  - The Provider is actively working towards their Equality and Diversity objectives to improve retention of learners from all backgrounds.
  - The staff actively works to support learners with different needs and diverse backgrounds.
  - Induction in use for new participants includes information on the Provider's commitment to equality and diversity.
- How effective are our marketing and referral systems in attracting learners? Do we have effective contacts with all the referral agencies?
  - How do we engage with potential and actual learners? How effective are these methods?
  - Does our induction process ensure learners are aware of all options available to them and how to contact SDS?
  - How do we work with external partners to ensure effective transition arrangements are in place from work experience to employment?
  - How do we support learners to make informed choices about the next phase of their learning or employment?
  - How do we evaluate feedback from the learners and are we effective in reacting to the results of surveys and feedback? Do we disaggregate data?
  - Does our provision reflect the demography of the area?
  - Does our induction information clearly explain why equality monitoring data is collected and how it will be used to promote early disclosure by learners?
  - Do we have appropriate and sufficient resources to meet the range of learner needs?
  - How do we ensure we place no barriers to learners wanting to access our training?
  - Who do we involve to ensure learner's needs are met?
  - Is the support we provide sufficient to help Learners sustain employment? Are we meeting or exceeding current equality and diversity legislation?

<p><b>2.3 The Provider takes proactive steps to increase participation from disabled young people, from minority ethnic backgrounds or care experienced and to address occupational segregation by gender.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and Diversity plan is in place to take progressing and proportionate steps to increase participation in line with provider targets set for E and D key performance levels</li> <li>• Targeted marketing is in place to promote opportunities to underrepresented groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are we meeting or exceeding our current equality and diversity targets?</li> <li>• How successful are our plans to implement actions to improve access and sustainability to those from underrepresented and E and D Key Target Groups?</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.4 The Provider engages with employers to ensure their needs are met.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective marketing materials and methods are in place to attract new employers and repeat business.</li> <li>• Discussion takes place at recruitment of placement providers and employers to capture what training requirements they need and level of commitment.</li> <li>• Employers are involved in planning training delivery to ensure training options offered are in line with their requirements for each sector.</li> <li>• Employer needs are reviewed regularly to identify any changes in their requirements.</li> <li>• Regular communication with employers is in place to cascade appropriate information to support successful training delivery.</li> <li>• Employers are actively involved at all stages of the learner journey.</li> <li>• Contracts, contract reviews and employer surveys are established and the feedback is evaluated and actioned if appropriate.</li> <li>• The Provider is confident in their ability to effectively communicate the business case for diversity to employers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How successful are our marketing systems in attracting new employers and repeat business?</li> <li>• Do we have a network of employers?</li> <li>• How do we engage with potential and actual employers? How effective are these methods?</li> <li>• How do we capture the employer needs? Are there formal records of this e.g. Work Based Learning document?</li> <li>• Are employer's needs met for each sector covered by the agreement?</li> <li>• How do we review changes in employers' requirements and the environment?</li> <li>• Do we have a successful means of communication in place? How effective are our contracting and review arrangements.</li> <li>• Do we ensure that work placement and work experience opportunities develop the necessary skills for future employability?</li> <li>• How successful are we in gathering feedback from the employers and how do we evaluate the results and actively change/develop as necessary?</li> <li>• Do we provide sufficient flexible/customised delivery methods and support addressing employer needs?</li> <li>• Do we support and encourage employers to take positive action to recruit learners from underrepresented groups?</li> <li>• Do we understand which groups are underrepresented within employers sectors?</li> </ul>

<p><b>2.5 The assessment process is used to promote effective learning.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Provider ensures plans are in place to schedule assessments in line with the programme and qualifications.</li> <li>• Methods of providing feedback and encouraging reflection on progress are closely monitored to ensure they are effective and outcomes are shared with the appropriate stakeholder.</li> <li>• Arrangements for learners with additional support needs are assessed and appropriate measures put in place.</li> <li>• Suitably qualified and competent staff are recruited and retained.</li> <li>• Regular assessment, internal verification and standardisation reviews are in place for individual frameworks included in training delivery.</li> <li>• Positive feedback received from the awarding body reports.</li> <li>• Feedback is gathered from the learners, employers, stakeholders and staff.</li> <li>• The assessment process takes account of entrance criteria, learners' curriculum areas and feedback from schools where appropriate.</li> <li>• Relevant information and support is provided appropriate to each learning environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are our assessment materials, methods and staff resources sufficient to meet the awarding bodies' requirements?</li> <li>• How do we know that training being delivered by employers meets the relevant framework requirements?</li> <li>• Do the learners and employers view our assessment and review methods as effective?</li> <li>• Are we able to address additional support needs when required and do we have key contacts?</li> <li>• Are assessment processes suitable for all sectors?</li> <li>• Are we resourced to carry out the assessment and internal verification duties?</li> <li>• How do we gather feedback from learners and employers and how do we address findings?</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 Partnerships and Resources</b></p>	<p><i>Excellent Training Provider plan and manage external partnerships, suppliers and internal resources in order to support their strategy, policies and the successful delivery of high quality training. They ensure that they effectively manage the learning environment across partners for the benefit of learners from all backgrounds</i></p>	

<p><b>3.1 The Provider has appropriate partnerships in place.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Provider has appropriate and effective partnerships with local communities, other Providers, employers, stakeholders, industry bodies, public sector agencies and equality partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to assist strategic decision-making</li> <li>• to promote access and inclusion</li> <li>• to respond to requirements of partners and stakeholders</li> <li>• to collaborate with partners</li> <li>• to provide the additional support needed for learners.</li> <li>• to maximise referrals</li> <li>• to progress learners into sustained employment and further learning pathways</li> <li>• Targeted marketing is in place for key stakeholders as appropriate, schools, parents, local authorities and employers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have we successfully communicated to our partners and stakeholders the need for commitment to Equality and Diversity and activities to support the objectives?</li> <li>• Are we effective in involving our partners to enhance the learning and promote inclusion of underrepresented groups?</li> <li>• Have we been able to secure the appropriate partnerships to deliver our service successfully? (Awarding and funding bodies, equality partners, guidance network, referral organisations, employer networks and community) If not, do we know where to get advice?</li> <li>• Do we attend Provider Forums/Community of Practice/ networks/working groups and events?</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.2 The Provider manages and uses its resources and learning environment for the benefit of learners and employers.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provider should ensure they have training arrangements that are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient, adequate and accessible accommodation and facilities available,</li> <li>• ICT and learning equipment/materials at all locations, including partner premises.</li> <li>• Sufficient staff and skills to give the learners a worthwhile experience.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Provider carries out monitoring of learning patterns of learners, whether at Provider or Employer premises, in order to provide appropriate individual support and extra help and guidance when necessary.</li> <li>• The Provider follows all relevant health and safety regulations, including risk assessment of all of its activities and premises.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we know our resources and learning environment are fit for purpose? Do we have gaps? Are we addressing changes in curriculum?</li> <li>• Are all learning materials up to date and do they take account of equality and diversity?</li> <li>• Do we have the correct no of staff and skills in place?</li> <li>• How effective are we at listening and reacting to our customers' requests and needs?</li> <li>• What Health and Safety procedures do we have in place, is our policy up-to-date?</li> <li>• How well do our staff work with external agencies to enable learners to access additional services and support?</li> </ul>

<p><b>3.3 The Provider ensures contracting arrangements are in place with all partners.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner and employer requirements are considered when contracting for training provision.</li> <li>• There are robust contract management arrangements in place.</li> <li>• Service level agreements detail clear expectations and obligations including quality, equality and diversity, such as equality monitoring, taking positive action, supporting diverse learners and CPD for staff.</li> <li>• Surveys are carried out with stakeholders to review their needs are met and any areas of concern raised are actioned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have we successfully communicated to our partners and stakeholders the need for commitment to Equality and Diversity and activities to support the objectives?</li> <li>• Are we effective in involving our partners to enhance the learning and promote inclusion of underrepresented groups?</li> <li>• Have we been able to secure the appropriate partnerships to deliver our service successfully? (Awarding and funding bodies, equality partners, guidance network, referral organisations, employer networks and community) If not, do we know where to get advice?</li> <li>• Do we attend Provider Forums/Community of Practice/ networks/working groups and events?</li> </ul>
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## RESULTS

<b>4 Leadership and Staff Results</b>	<i>Excellent Training Providers achieve and sustain outstanding results that meet or exceed the needs and expectations of their people working towards continuous improvement in the delivery of training.</i>	
<b>4.1 The Provider makes effective use of their results to measure continuous improvement.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Provider uses results of self evaluation to show positive trends in line with the Provider’s strategic goals and to demonstrate continuous improvement at least annually</li> <li>• The Provider evaluates areas for improvement to confirm progress and completion within the SDS Quality Action Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How good is our capacity for continuous improvement? Does our evaluation demonstrate effective progress?</li> <li>• Is our progress on addressing areas for improvement sufficient?</li> <li>• Do we have examples of continuous improvement?</li> </ul>
<b>4.2 The Provider meets the needs of staff through effective engagement in setting and achieving objectives...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Provider uses analysis of staff feedback gathered from surveys, or other methods, to demonstrate trends by protected characteristics and to show where areas for action are addressed as appropriate.</li> <li>• The Provider can demonstrate positive trends by using the results of staff surveys where the satisfaction of employees is measured.</li> <li>• Staff retention demonstrates a stable workforce with little or no turnover in line with the industry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have we successfully acted upon staff feedback?</li> <li>• Can we demonstrate examples of how we addressed points raised?</li> <li>• Are we able to demonstrate that staff is motivated and involved?</li> </ul>
<b>4.3 The staff are actively involved in planning to improve and develop services.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Provider can demonstrate the staffs understanding of their strategic goals to help encourage staff participation and satisfaction levels.</li> <li>• The Provider can show the involvement of staff both internally and externally has resulted in improvement initiatives.</li> <li>• The Provider can demonstrate where initiatives have been taken on board and led to continuous improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we actively involve staff when planning or developing the service?</li> <li>• What are the results of improvement initiatives?</li> </ul>

<p><b>4.4 Staff relations and communications are effective.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The results of staff surveys, or other methods, are used to demonstrate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness of communication and information sharing.</li> <li>Staff are motivated.</li> <li>Staff work well together.</li> <li>A strong team ethic is apparent.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How successful are we at collating staff feedback, does the record determine they are motivated and how well they work together?</li> <li>How do we know if we have a strong team?</li> <li>How do we know if our communications are effective?</li> </ul>
<p><b>5 Learner and Provider Results.</b></p>	<p><i>Excellent Training Providers achieve and sustain outstanding results that meet or exceed the needs and expectations of their learners.</i></p>	
<p><b>5.1 The training programmes and services are accessible, flexible and inclusive to meet learner needs and support successful learning.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate measures are in place that demonstrates the accessibility of the programme.</li> <li>Benchmarking against others demonstrates flexibility and inclusiveness of programme.</li> <li>Evidence of sustainable performance is held to demonstrate learner's needs are met.</li> <li>Learner's Satisfaction Surveys and learner feedback are used to demonstrate how any barriers to learning have been addressed.</li> <li>The Provider is able to provide documentation and trend analysis that shows positive trends that offers confidence that this will be sustained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have we been successful in setting targets to identify accessibility of programme linked to protected characteristics?</li> <li>Are our measures in place effective in showing improvements against equality and diversity targets and if not what actions are being taken?</li> <li>Have we recorded effective examples of improvements to reduce barriers and improve inclusiveness?</li> <li>Are we successful in gathering learner feedback, evaluating results and taking appropriate action?</li> <li>Do we benchmark our performance against similar organisations?</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.2 Recruitment is reflective of local demographics for the SDS Equality and Diversity Key Target Groups.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment is disaggregated to show split across E and D Key Target Groups and to record how representative they are in line with local demographics.</li> <li>Data is recorded to show progression trends year on year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we set our own equality KPIs?</li> <li>How successful are our plans and processes to demonstrate representation?</li> <li>Do we identify any gaps in recruitment and how are we addressing this and do we know what the impact is?</li> </ul>

<p><b>5.3 Learners make planned progress and achieve recognised outcomes.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement rates, attainment of qualifications and successful completion of training are measured and evaluated to establish trends over a 3 year period.</li> <li>• Trends are disaggregated to show that underrepresented groups have comparable completion rates to all learners.</li> <li>• Improvement in drop-out rates can be demonstrated minimising early leavers to help achievement rates.</li> <li>• Learner progression to employment or further learning is measured and evaluated to establish trends over a 3 year period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we track and evaluate figures over a 3 year period to provide information on achievement trends?</li> <li>• Are we successful in achieving our learner targets?</li> <li>• How do we record and analyse results?</li> <li>• Do we disaggregate by sector and protected characteristics? Do we perform better in one sector than another and if so why?</li> <li>• What have we done to improve the results?</li> <li>• What do we do to minimise early leavers?</li> <li>• How can we assist learners not achieving on time?</li> <li>• How do we review progression to employment?</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.4 The Provider achieves its aims objectives and targets to maintain high levels of trainee retention, progression and outcomes.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Provider has appropriate measures in place that demonstrate sustained good performance including equality and diversity.</li> <li>• The audits undertaken show that results are reliable, timely and accurate.</li> <li>• Analysis of objectives and targets are disaggregated by sector and protected characteristics to produce separate results and action taken where appropriate.</li> <li>• Impact on the labour market and employment opportunities are documented to demonstrate effectiveness of service delivered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are we successful in tracking and evaluating performance over a 3 year period to provide information on successes and trends?</li> <li>• How do we record and analyse results, does it provide equality and diversity data?</li> <li>• Do we disaggregate by protected characteristics?</li> <li>• What have we done to improve the results?</li> <li>• Are we effective in minimising early leavers and encouraging learner retention, in particular under protected characteristics?</li> <li>• How do we monitor progression to employment and track sustainability trends over a 3 year period?</li> </ul>

<b>6 Partnership Results</b>	<i>Excellent Training Providers achieve and sustain outstanding results that meet or exceed the needs and expectations of relevant partners and other stakeholders.</i>	
<b>6.1 The programme and services meet the skills needs and expectations of employers.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Provider monitors the links and partnerships with employers and industry bodies to determine the relevance, success and effectiveness of the programme.</li> <li>• The Provider measures the retention and achievement of former learners by employer annually to show trends over a minimum 3 year period to determine the effectiveness and sustainability of the programme.</li> <li>• Employer satisfaction is measured annually to show trends over a minimum 3 year period to verify that specific needs are met successfully.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we ensure expectations and needs of partners are met?</li> <li>• How do we monitor employer satisfaction?</li> <li>• Are links with employers and industry bodies working effectively?</li> <li>• What do the results of retention and sustainability tell us and do we know where we need to improve?</li> <li>• Do we know where our successes are?</li> </ul>
<b>6.2 The programmes and services meet the needs of other stakeholders.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Provider monitors the links with other stakeholders to determine relevance, success and effectiveness of the service.</li> <li>• The level of participation and influence of stakeholders in the design and evaluation of programmes and services is measured by the Provider to determine if it has had a successful impact.</li> <li>• Arrangements to meet specific needs in the community, including equality and diversity are reviewed on a regular basis and success evaluated by the Provider to determine stakeholder satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we know if our relationships with stakeholders are effective?</li> <li>• How successful are we in providing services to meet the needs of stakeholders?</li> <li>• Do we know where we need to improve?</li> <li>• How do we monitor stakeholder satisfaction?</li> <li>• How do we assess where we have met specific needs including equality and diversity?</li> </ul>

The Quality Standards reflect Equality and Diversity (E&D) throughout showing both Quality Indicators and Success Indicators specifically relevant to E and D. Through the integration of E and D the Provider Equality Action Plan has been merged into the single Quality Action Plan reducing the burden on Providers.

The SDS E and D Team can provide additional advice and guidance. Please contact your SIA or E and D Team member.

Below is additional information including some examples of evidence that may assist you in addressing E and D in your area.

Questions for discussion	Example of types of evidence
<p><b>Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have we successfully addressed equality and diversity within the strategic plan and how do we ensure staff are aware of the requirements and their rights and responsibilities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mission Statements reflect equalities</li> <li>Communications strategy includes references to equality and diversity</li> <li>Strategic and Operational plans reference equalities objective</li> <li>Meetings with an equalities focus reflected in agendas and minutes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kitemarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we have, or are we working towards an Equality and Diversity Kitemark to ensure we are demonstrating policy in place?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committees and structures encompassing equalities activity and focus</li> <li>Self evaluation documentation highlighting equalities issues</li> <li>Equal Opportunities Policies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we monitor our own workforce by protected characteristics, from application to appointment, and are we aware of potential impact from any unconscious bias?</li> <li>Do we understand what training is required for our staff and is it provided?</li> <li>Are any gaps in staff awareness of equality and diversity covered by staff CPD?</li> <li>Do we encourage staff to improve their own and other people's diversity related awareness, knowledge and skill?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff responsibility for equalities e.g. in job remits</li> <li>Records of staff development on equalities</li> <li>Activities to embed a shared culture of diversity and respect</li> <li>Training Needs Analysis for staff</li> <li>CPD records</li> </ul>
<p><b>Learners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we address any perceived barriers to accessing training?</li> <li>Do we provide different sufficient learning methods and support depending on learner specific needs?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of examples of reasonable adjustments for participants</li> <li>Surveys of learners satisfaction with on course programmes</li> <li>Evidence of Additional Support Plans for participants - where appropriate</li> <li>Support of learners is reviewed and monitored throughout their training programme</li> <li>Evidence of equality monitoring at induction, ongoing and at exit</li> <li>Evidence of making reasonable adjustments for learners as appropriate</li> <li>Clear actions are identified on equalities and diversity in the TP Action Plan</li> <li>Knowledge or usage of EF Additional Support Needs Fund and/or Access to Work on MA Programmes</li> <li>Evidence that alternative assessment strategies are known, available and are used as appropriate</li> <li>Learning materials are available in accessible formats e.g. large print or use of assistive technology</li> </ul>

<p><b>Recruitment and Representation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we identify opportunities to address under-representation or gender segregation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of progressive recruitment practices e.g. name blind selection or adverts for vacancies in differentiated publications</li> <li>• Evidence of events, marketing materials or publications/campaigns targeting under represented groups</li> <li>• Evidence of marketing materials avoiding occupational segregation within the workplace.</li> <li>• Progress and retention are monitored by equality e.g. disability, ethnicity and gender by progression and retention</li> <li>• Differences in outcomes and retention for targeted groups are recognised, monitored and addressed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partners/Employers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we ensure that external partners encourage learners to access additional services to support learning?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of key messages/communications to employers</li> <li>• Evidence of partnership and engagement to include references to inclusion/ equalities and diversity</li> <li>• Service Level Agreements/Partnership Agreements include references to addressing under representation and/or public sector equalities duties</li> </ul>
<p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a public sector body are we linking actions to Corporate Parenting Duty and Public Sector Equality Duty?</li> <li>• Do we understand case for equality monitoring and how to keep monitoring data confidential?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of local community/disability/Minority Ethnic organisations e.g. by engagement and/or use of SDS Additional Support Needs guides and SDS Demographics templates per local authority area</li> <li>• Knowledge of local area demographics on e.g. disability, minority ethnic density.</li> <li>• Knowledge of and evidence of usage of SDS ASN Guides in relevant local authority areas.</li> <li>• Knowledge of and evidence of usage of SDS Additional Support Needs Guides or other similar resources.</li> </ul>

Typical Timetable	Timeline
Confirmation of Visit by Assessor	Minimum of one month prior to visit date
Notification of Evidence Requirements	One week prior to visit date
On-site work	Visits currently take place over 2-3 days with some interview work being carried out post visit
Summary of Findings	Verbal at visit conclusion and written summary 2 days after completion of visit work
Full Report	Completed report and final score award will be issued within 4 weeks of the visit completion

This appendix provides a mapping of Standard headings from SDS previous Quality Standards to the updated Quality Standards as well as to EFQM and Education Scotland.

Updated SDS Standards	Mapped to SDS updated Standards		
	Previous SDS Standards	EFQM Standards	Education Scotland
<b>1</b> Leadership and Management	<b>1</b> Leadership: 3 – Staffing	Leadership; People	Leadership and Quality Culture
<b>2</b> Planning and Delivery of Training	<b>2</b> Planning of Training Delivery; <b>5</b> Delivery of Training	Strategy; Processes, Products and Services	How Good is our Delivery of Training
<b>3</b> Partnership and Resources	<b>4</b> Partnership and Resources	Partnerships and Resources	How Good is our Delivery of Training
<b>4</b> Leadership and Staff Results	<b>7</b> Staff Outcomes	People Results	Outcomes and Impact
<b>5</b> Learner and Provider Results	<b>6</b> Learner Outcomes; <b>9</b> Training Provider / Organisational Outcomes	People/Society; Key Results	Outcomes and Impact
<b>6</b> Partnership Results	<b>8</b> Partnership Outcomes	Customer Results	Outcomes and Impact

Individual Success Indicators may no longer sit in the same category and may have moved as a success indicator under a different standard.

Overall Provider BRAG Rating, Score and Grades Issued

Grade 6	Grade 5	Grade 4	Grade 3	Grade 2	Grade 1
Score rating not awarded (Unsatisfactory)	Score below 300 (Weak)	Score between 301 and 400 (Satisfactory)	Score between 401 and 500 (Good)	Score between 501 and 600 (Very Good)	Score over 601 (Excellent)
Provider is <b>unable to demonstrate</b> how they meet the Standards – immediate remedial action required	Provider has been <b>unable to meet</b> the Standards at an <b>acceptable level</b> – important areas for improvement identified	Provider has demonstrated how they have <b>met all</b> Standards at the <b>minimum level</b> – with specific areas for improvement or further development highlighted	Provider has <b>fully demonstrated</b> meeting the Standards with <b>strong strengths</b> and minor areas for improvement noted	Provider has <b>fully demonstrated</b> meeting the Standards at a <b>high level</b> with major strengths and a few areas of enhancement to demonstrate ongoing Continuous improvement	Provider has <b>fully demonstrated</b> meeting all Standards providing a <b>very high level</b> of assurance - exemplifies best practice including delivery of ongoing Continuous Improvement.
Improvement Plan to show progression and significant improvement within 3 months.	Visit within year to demonstrate improvement.	Visit will take place within 1 to 2 years dependant on number of AFIs.		Visit will take place after 3 years.	

If you are a new Provider you will be formally assessed within 2 years of beginning to use funding to train apprentices or learners.



## Principles of Assessment

Assessors will:

- ensure that the assessment is of high quality and responsive to the needs of all learners;
- ensure that judgements are secure, reliable, valid and based on first-hand evidence;
- involve providers fully in the assessment process
- use the provider's self-assessment report as the starting point for the assessment and to identify key areas for review in order to make judgements on the validity of its findings;
- keep to a minimum any requirements for documentation and preparation by the provider;
- gain the learners' perspective and that of employers and other stakeholders; and
- be constructive in identifying and supporting providers with important areas for improvement.

## Code of conduct for Assessors

Assessors should uphold the highest possible standards in their work. All assessors follow the approach of EFQM.

When conducting the assessment, assessors will:

- clearly identify themselves explaining their role and approach;
- carry out their work with integrity, courtesy and due sensitivity;
- evaluate the work of the provider objectively;
- report honestly, fairly and impartially;
- communicate clearly and openly;
- act in the best interests of learners and employers; and
- respect the confidentiality of all information received during the course of their work.

*It is important that assessors judge the effectiveness of provision and leadership on their contribution to outcomes and not on the basis of any preferences for particular methods. The key to the judgement is whether the methods and organisation are fit for the purpose of achieving high standards of work for all learners.*

## Expectations of providers

In order that assessments are constructive and beneficial, it is important that assessors and providers establish and maintain a professional working environment based on mutual courtesy, respect and professional behaviour. Assessors are expected to uphold SDS code of conduct but we also expect providers to:

- apply their own codes of conduct in their dealings with assessors;
- enable assessors to conduct their assessment in an open and honest way;
- enable assessors to evaluate provision objectively against the SDS Quality Management Framework
- provide evidence that will enable assessors to report honestly, fairly and reliably about their provision;
- maintain a purposeful dialogue with the reporting assessor and the assessment team;
- recognise that assessors need to observe practice and talk to staff, learners and other stakeholders without the presence of a manager or a senior leader;
- draw any concerns about the assessment to the attention of assessors in a timely and suitable manner through the nominee or lead Assessor;
- work with assessors to minimise disruption and stress throughout the assessment; and
- ensure the health and safety of assessors while on their premises.

*At the point of the assessment notification, providers should review the composition of the assessment team.*

*It is the responsibility of providers to highlight any perceived or actual conflicts of interest prior to the start of their assessment.*

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Areas for improvement</b>	Areas where actions are required to improve activity where potential gaps have been identified
<b>EFQM</b>	European Foundation for Quality Management
<b>Employers</b>	Employers where apprentices are employed or placed
<b>Enhancement</b>	Build on existing processes and delivery working towards Continuous Improvement
<b>Key Target Groups</b>	Equality and Diversity Key Target Groups - Gender, Disability, Ethnic Minority, Care Experienced
<b>Learners</b>	Participants undergoing training or learning; Apprentices, Learners, Pupils
<b>Partners</b>	Schools, Colleges, Awarding Bodies, Sector Skills bodies, Other Training Providers
<b>Protected Characteristics</b>	Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.
<b>Providers</b>	Training Providers or other organisations (including direct Employer contracts and Local Authorities) in receipt of SDS funding for delivery of training
<b>Quality Action Plan (QAP)</b>	Captures actions to improve, develop and enhance activity and results
<b>RADAR</b>	Results, Approach, Deploy, Assess, Refine
<b>Self Assessment (SA)</b>	Record of activity and actions on how SDS Quality Standards are met
<b>Service Level Agreement</b>	Written agreement between two or more parties, signed and dated
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Government, Local Employability Partners, Employers, Parents