The background of the cover is divided into two main sections. The top section is a solid blue color with large, overlapping, semi-transparent circular shapes in various shades of blue. The bottom section is black, featuring a series of colorful, overlapping loops in shades of blue, orange, and green, resembling a stylized chain or a series of interlocking rings.

# Guidelines for Internal Centre Evaluation

**Quality Framework Initiative**  
**For Youthreach & Senior Traveller Training Centres**

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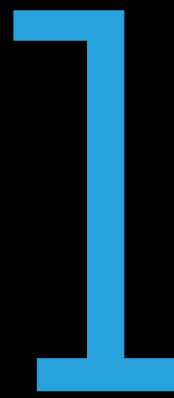
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## Abbreviations

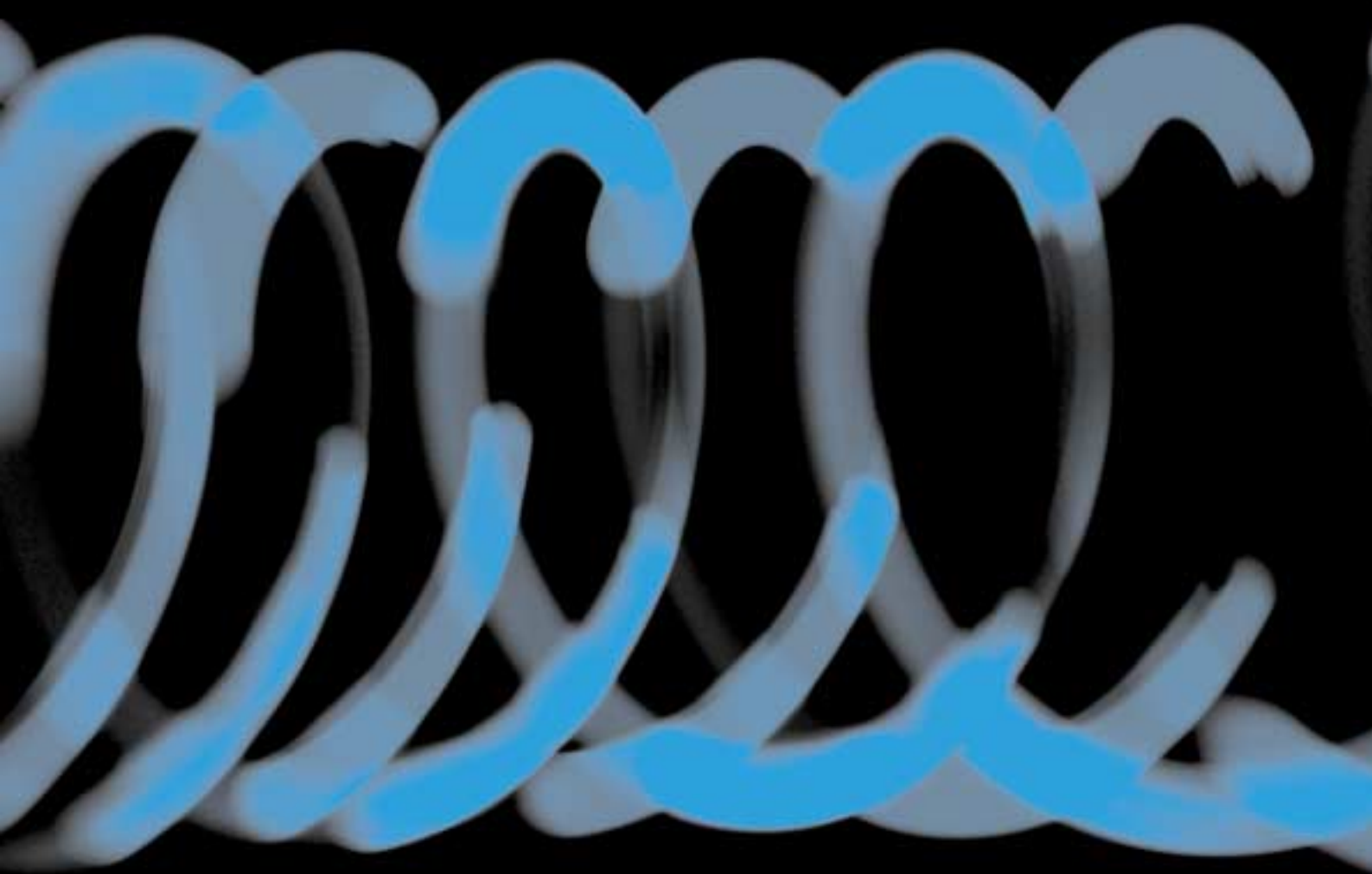
<b>AEO</b>	Adult Education Officer
<b>CDP</b>	Centre Development Planning
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>DES</b>	Department of Education and Science
<b>EO</b>	Education Officer
<b>FETAC</b>	Further Education and Training Awards Council
<b>ICE</b>	Internal Centre Evaluation
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>IVEA</b>	Irish Vocational Education Association
<b>LCA</b>	Leaving Certificate Applied
<b>NALA</b>	National Adult Literacy Agency
<b>QFI</b>	Quality Framework Initiative
<b>STTC</b>	Senior Traveller Training Centre
<b>VEC</b>	Vocational Education Committee



# 1

## section one

Introducing  
Internal Centre  
Evaluation



## INTRODUCTION

Internal Centre Evaluation is one of the key building blocks in the YOUTHREACH and Senior Traveller Training Centre Quality Framework. As an essential aspect of a centre's quality assurance process it allows stakeholders to examine past experience, and to apply the lessons learned to future planning. In practical terms internal centre evaluation is an annual process which would take place over two consecutive days and would involve the participation of the Co-Ordinator /Director, staff, learners as appropriate, and representatives of local management.

Many centres have already developed formal structures for centre evaluation and may wish to continue using tried and trusted processes. These guidelines set out one particular model of Internal Centre Evaluation. A centre may therefore wish to follow these guidelines as they are, or alternatively add aspects of the guidelines to systems that are already in place.

The internal evaluation process is endorsed by practitioners for the following reasons:

<b>The Internal Evaluation Process</b>
■ helps centres to identify progress towards the achievement of aims
■ allows centres to assess the effectiveness of methods and approaches used
■ encourages participation, ownership and empowerment
■ motivates and affirms good practice
■ highlights difficulties and recommends solutions
■ combats fatigue and isolation within a staff team
■ provides an opportunity to document the work
■ provides an opportunity for staff development
■ encourages the participation of all key stakeholder groups

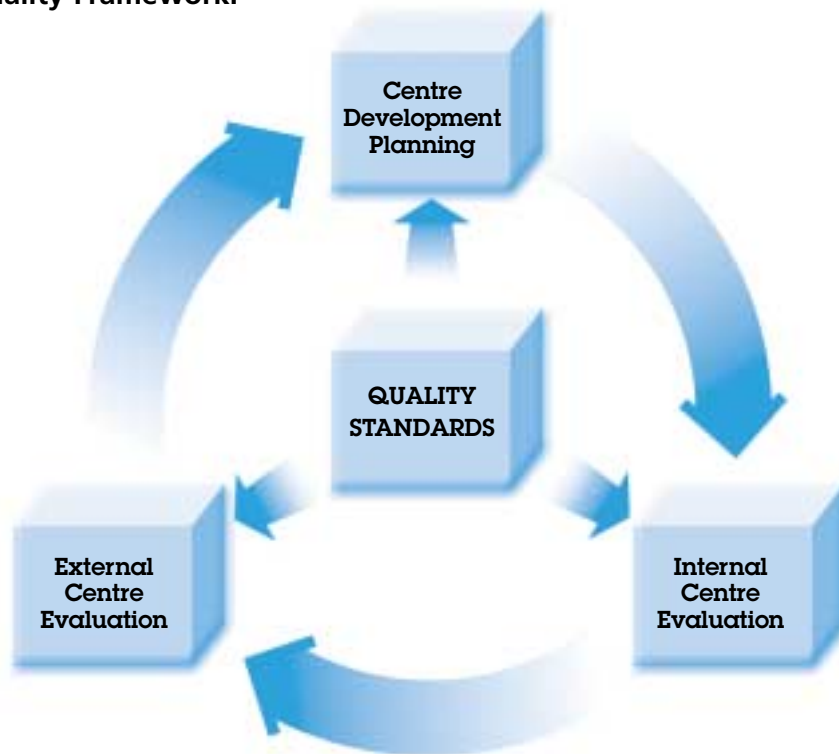
Centres are constantly in a process of change. This is particularly the case when it comes to meeting the needs of the learners. The demands on staff and management often result in the provision of short term solutions to problems rather than taking a more systematic approach. It is vital therefore that centres take time out to engage in an evaluation process that looks at the effectiveness of centre practice.

## EVALUATION - PART OF THE QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The Quality Framework forms the basis of the quality assurance system. It comprises four interconnected building blocks (see diagram).

1. Quality Standards
2. Centre Development Planning
3. Internal Centre Evaluation
4. External Centre Evaluation



**The Quality Framework:**

Quality Standards are at the core, as they inform the other key aspects of the framework. The system of quality assurance consists of a cyclical process of planning and evaluation.

On an annual basis key aspects of the programme are evaluated. The **Internal Centre Evaluation** process involves the participation of learners, Directors/Co-Ordinators, staff and local management. The quality standards outline 27 quality areas and it is recommended that a centre would evaluate 9-12 quality areas each year to include an evaluation of the implementation of the centre development plan. Annual centre evaluation should involve a two-day session where stakeholders compare centre performance against the quality standard using the evaluation criteria outlined in this document.

Centre evaluation provides an opportunity for stakeholders to examine the value of the work that takes place in centres and acknowledge the achievements of trainees, Co-ordinator/ Director, staff and management. Areas for improvement are identified and actions are planned. Actions arising from the evaluation process are generally implemented in the short term, however, some of the actions are referred for inclusion in the centre development plan. An important aspect of annual centre evaluation is the collation of evidence. The guidelines for centre evaluation outline the various forms of evidence that may be gathered in relation to each quality area.

External evaluation involves the evaluation of centre performance by someone outside the organisation. This allows for an external and unbiased view to be expressed and provides an opportunity for the recognition and affirmation of good practice.

## EVALUATION

Before engaging in an evaluation process it is often very useful to examine stakeholders' understanding of the terms "evaluation" and "evaluation process". A number of useful definitions are outlined below. These can be used as a focus for discussing the meaning of terms which will in turn assist the evaluation team to come to a shared understanding of the task in hand.

**Evaluation** is the systematic and structured process of reviewing an experience, determining its worth or value and deciding what needs to be changed or further developed.

**Self-evaluation** is an internal process of self-reflection and assessment.

Clarke, Jane *A Guide to Self-Evaluation*, 1996

**Evaluate:** To consider or study something carefully and decide how good or bad it is.

NALA (pub.) *NALA Quality Framework User Guide*, 2002

**Evaluation** is the structured process by which a project's activities and achievements are assessed and understood.

Blackley, Goddard, Seymour *Project Monitoring and Evaluation*,

**Evaluation** is the systematic collection and interpretation of evidence leading to a judgement of value with a view to action.

Beeby, 1997, quoted in *School Development Planning Initiative Guidelines*, 2001

### Evaluation Within the Quality Framework

Evaluation can serve many different functions and can be approached in many different ways by various organisations. Within the Quality Framework, evaluation involves the process of examining a centre's practice with regard to the Quality Standards, acknowledging success and identifying areas and specific actions for improvement.

The important aspects of this evaluation process are outlined below:

- The Quality Standards were developed through consultation with all stakeholder groups and therefore the criteria for evaluation reflect what stakeholders believe to be important.
- All centre staff, learners and local management can participate in the evaluation process.
- Those engaging in the evaluation can select the areas for evaluation in any given year ensuring that the focus of the evaluation is relevant to the work of the centre.
- The evaluation process does not focus on measuring the degree to which centres comply with the Quality Standards. Rather the process looks at stakeholders' level of satisfaction with various quality areas and the evidence that demonstrates good practice.
- The time allocated to the evaluation process ensures that stakeholders quickly identify areas for improvement and achievable actions.
- The evaluation process is not simply focused on the production of a report. The purpose of engaging in the process is that it leads to improvement in the programmes for learners, staff and management.

**WHO CAN BE INVOLVED?**

The evaluation process can involve the participation of a number of groups and individuals to varying degrees. A range of options for the participation of key stakeholders is set out below. A decision on who should participate and how best to engage the various groups can be made at local level. Very often, when centres are unfamiliar with the ICE process, it is simply the staff team that is involved. As confidence in the process grows increased participation by other stakeholders follows.

**Co-Ordinator/ Director and Staff Team**

The Co-Ordinator/ Director and the full staff team can participate in all aspects of the evaluation process including the planning stage and two-day evaluation session. It is important that all part-time staff would attend if possible as this experience contributes to their sense of importance within the staff team.

**Management (including Regional Co-Ordinator, Adult Education Officer, Education Officer, Chief Executive Officer, Board of Management representative)**

It may be appropriate for members of management to attend the two day evaluation session particularly if they understand how the centre operates and have a good working relationship with staff. If it is not feasible for management to attend the entire two-day session, it may be appropriate that they attend only part of it, for example, the action planning session on the second day. This would provide an opportunity for management to suggest solutions to some of the problems raised earlier in the session.

Alternatively, management could meet with the centre Co-Ordinator/ Director in advance of the evaluation session and discuss any issues relating to the performance of the centre. Feedback and recommendations from this meeting can be recorded and brought to the evaluation session. The use of a structured questionnaire may be used as a focus for discussion and feedback during this meeting. A sample questionnaire for this purpose is outlined in Appendix C.

If it is not possible for a member of management to feed into the evaluation session it may be possible for the Co-Ordinator/ Director to meet with management following the evaluation session. The evaluation report can be presented and discussed. This is an opportunity for members of management to identify measures that might support the implementation of certain actions. Management could, for example, co-ordinate actions relating to staff development and training or policy development.

**Learners**

An evaluation session/s with learners should take place prior to the two-day evaluation session. Learners are generally asked to comment on quality areas that relate to their own experience of the programme. The findings should be collated and discussed by staff during the evaluation session. It is important to give feedback to learners in relation to the actions that are planned arising from the learner evaluation. Detailed guidelines on how learners can engage in evaluation are outlined in Section 3.

Some centres may wish to include learner representatives in the full evaluation process. This idea was tested during the Pilot Phase. In general, it was recommended that learner evaluation would occur separate to staff evaluation. The recommendation was based on the perceived difficulties that learners experienced in attending an evaluation session with staff. On these occasions learners had difficulty understanding the issues being discussed. Staff also had a problem raising potentially sensitive staff issues when learners were present.

In many centres, the inclusion of learners in the evaluation session may be central to the ethos of the centre and therefore learners can be involved, if they are supported to understand and participate in the process, and if the staff team are agreeable to their participation. The final decision on the nature of learner participation should be made locally.

### Parents/ Guardians

Parents can be involved in the evaluation process if any of the areas for evaluation relate to the parents' experience of the programme. This mainly applies to the parents of young participants (under nineteen years of age). It is particularly useful if staff want to understand parents'/ guardians' perceptions of the programme in general, or their level of satisfaction with communication between the centre and parents/ guardians. A specific questionnaire can be devised for this purpose or a member of staff may wish to meet a representative group of parents to discuss a range of issues. Possible questions that could be used in an interview with parents are outlined in Appendix D.

### Employers

If Work Experience is one of the areas being evaluated it may be useful to ask a number of employers about their views in relation to how the Work Experience Programme is organised and operated by the centre. A specific questionnaire can be devised for this purpose.

### Community Representatives

The range of community representatives that regularly engage with centres is very broad. This group includes individuals working in local schools, social services, youth service, advocate service, FAS, local Partnership companies, Gardai, community development groups, Chambers of Commerce and many others.

Some centres work so closely with certain community representatives that they become part of the "centre team". Where this occurs it may be appropriate that such individuals would attend the evaluation session. More usually, community representatives only have experience of certain aspects of the programme and therefore should only be involved in the evaluation process if such areas are being evaluated. This can be carried out through the use of questionnaires or interviews.

Quality Areas such as Communication and Links with the Community, Public Relations and Recruitment of Learners could involve carrying out a brief evaluation with certain community representatives. It can be interesting to hear how the programme is viewed by key community organisations. Feedback from questionnaires / interviews can be collated and presented during the evaluation session.

### WHAT CAN BE EVALUATED?

All the key activities and processes of the programme can be evaluated. These areas are outlined in the *Quality Standards* document and a list of the Quality Areas is outlined below. It must be acknowledged, however, that centres engage in many other activities that are not specifically mentioned in the *Quality Standards* document. Examples of this type of activity include trans-national/ exchange programmes and specific aspects of curriculum provision such as the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme or a summer programme. Centre staff may decide to include such areas in an annual evaluation session or indeed evaluate specific aspects of the programme at a separate time of year that fits in with a specific stage in the cycle of the project concerned.

Centres normally select 9 Quality Areas for evaluation. As centres become more experienced this number usually increases. If a centre has previously engaged in a Centre Development Planning Process it is important to evaluate the implementation of the Centre Plan over the previous year. If a large number of actions were planned it may not be possible to include many additional areas for evaluation. The balance of evaluating the implementation of the centre plan and the evaluation of the on-going activities of the centre will require some thought. The Quality Framework Co-Ordinator or the Facilitator will be able to advise centre staff in this regard.

### The Quality Standards

The Quality Standards are divided into four sections with each section further divided into 27 Quality Areas. Each Quality Area contains one or more Quality Standards which are further broken down into Evaluation Criteria.

Quality Areas for Evaluation	
SECTION	QUALITY AREAS
<b>Section One</b> Organisational Management	1. Ethos
	2. Planning
	3. Evaluation
	4. Communication and Links with the Community
	5. Transparency, Accountability and Public Relations
	6. Administration and Financial Management
	7. Record Keeping
	8. Health and Safety
	9. Premises
	10. Equipment
<b>Section Two</b> Personnel and Development	11. Staff Team
	12. Staff Recruitment and Induction
	13. Staff Development and Training
	14. Staff Support
<b>Section Three</b> Learning Environment	15. Social Environment
	16. Code of Behaviour
	17. Equality
	18. Interculturalism
<b>Section Four</b> Programme	19. Programme Development and Delivery
	20. Recruitment of Learners and Admission
	21. Initial Assessment, Induction and Review
	22. Learning Assessment and Certification
	23. Support Structures for Learners
	24. Literacy and Numeracy
	25. Social, Personal and Health Education
	26. Work Experience
	27. Transfer and Progression

### THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

It is recommended that a facilitator would be engaged to work with stakeholders at local level in order to assist with the evaluation process. Evaluation is not simply about completing a task. If this were the case then any informed individual within the organisation could in fact carry out a centre evaluation. Far more can be gained if the Director/ Co-Ordinator, staff, learners and local management engage in a process where all participants are given the responsibility of examining practice and recommending improvements and future actions. Through this process stakeholders are empowered to make decisions and solve problems. The facilitator does not carry out the evaluation of the programme but instead guides the process and encourages the active participation of all those involved.

Facilitators are not inspectors. While many may work or have worked in a Youthreach or Senior Traveller Training Centre they do not put themselves forwards as experts on quality. Stakeholders carry out the evaluation, examine evidence and decide on actions. The facilitator simply guides and supports this process to occur in an efficient manner. It is the stakeholders who decide if the evidence examined is up to standard and if policies and procedures are clearly laid out. Facilitators may ask probing questions to assist stakeholders in making their decisions but they do not have a role in judging standards of practice.

A team of facilitators has been trained to use the Guidelines for Internal Centre Evaluation. A list of trained facilitators will be issued to each centre and VEC. Each centre should select a facilitator from the list provided. It is up to each centre to book the facilitator well in advance of the evaluation session.

### THE OVERALL APPROACH

Stakeholders are facilitated and encouraged to engage in the process in a way that will allow participants to think, learn and develop ideas. Participants who are open to engaging in the process will achieve far more than the production of an evaluation report. The process allows everyone's views to be heard, valued and respected. Each participant is encouraged to express opinions about the operation of the centre and through this process can actively contribute to the development of new and improved systems of working that meet the needs of learners, staff and management. For each individual the process generally creates a greater awareness of the values, opinions and personal characteristics of the other participants in the group, as well as a greater understanding of the overall programme. The group will have the opportunity to work together as a team and engage in activities that clarify team values and encourage listening and respect. This generally results in clarity of purpose, teambuilding and very often provides a new impetus for staff and management as they look ahead to another year.

In order to create an atmosphere that would allow the group to work effectively together the facilitator will use a number of different methods of working with the group. These methods may include guided reflection, small and large group discussion, written exercises and drawing. In addition, it is likely that the facilitator will ask the group to engage in icebreaker and energising games. Each of these activities has a purpose as they help to break down barriers to participation, set the energy levels for an activity, focus the mind on a particular task and help participants to remain motivated throughout the session. The approach used by each facilitator depends on his/her own individual style of facilitation.

### SELECTING A VENUE

As the internal centre evaluation process is an integral aspect of the programme it is appropriate that, where possible, the evaluation session takes place in the centre. This may not be possible in all cases. Sometimes the rooms are not large enough or the environment is not conducive to the successful completion of the task or the process. In such circumstances it may be possible to access another VEC or community purpose building. Alternatively, it may be necessary to rent an appropriate venue for the duration of the session. In selecting a suitable room/venue it is important to bear the following in mind:

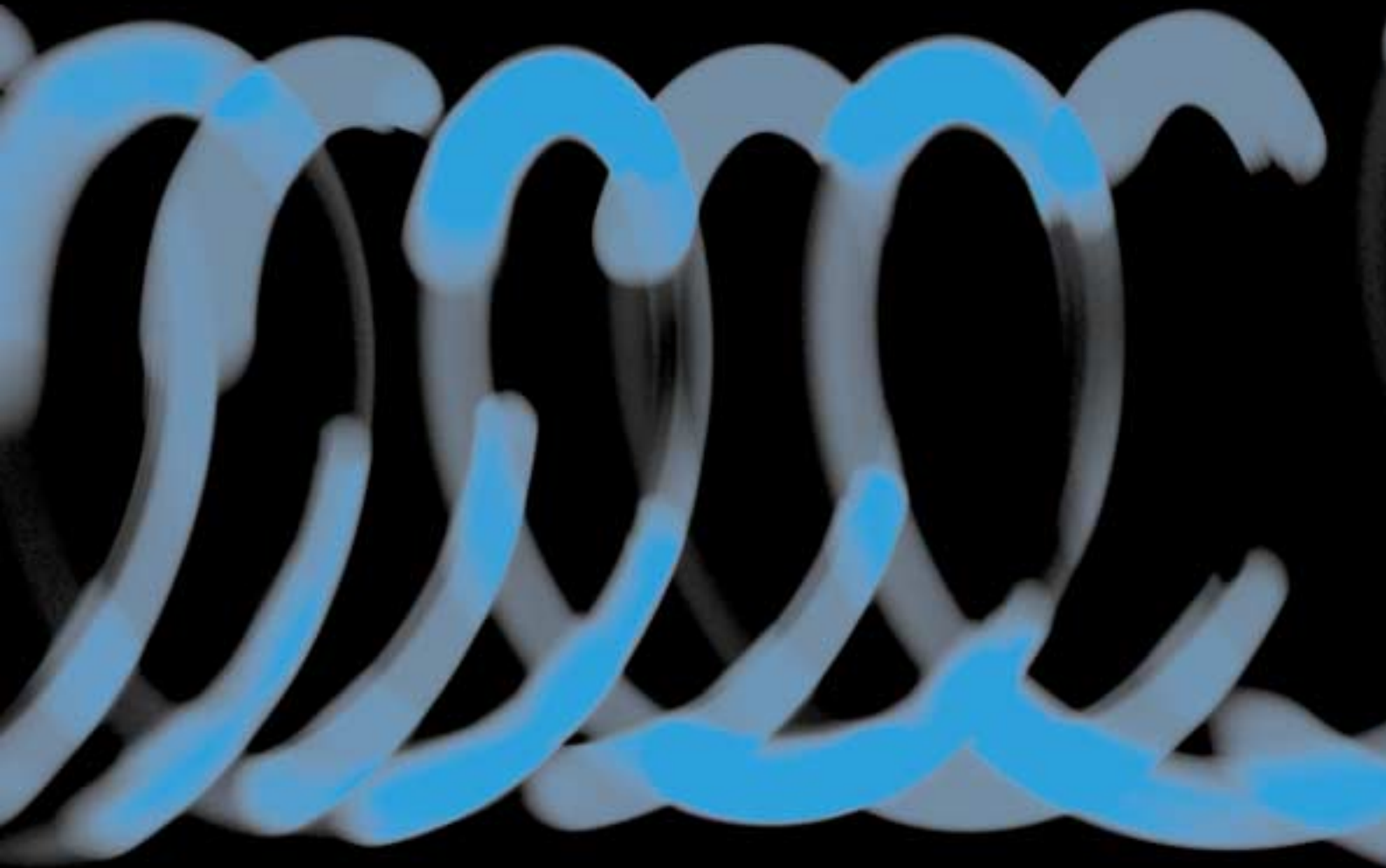
- the size of room
  - *big enough for large and small group activities*
  - *allows for movement / energetic warm-up activities*
- bright with natural light and ventilation
- tea/coffee making facilities nearby
- availability of suitable equipment: chairs, flip chart stand and paper, spare tables that can be easily moved

During the evaluation session participants may be sitting in one large group or a number of small groups. Very often participants prefer to do flip chart work on the floor, however some of the writing exercises are quite long and in this situation it is useful to have access to a number of small tables, on which they can lay out flip chart paper and write responses.

# 2

## section two

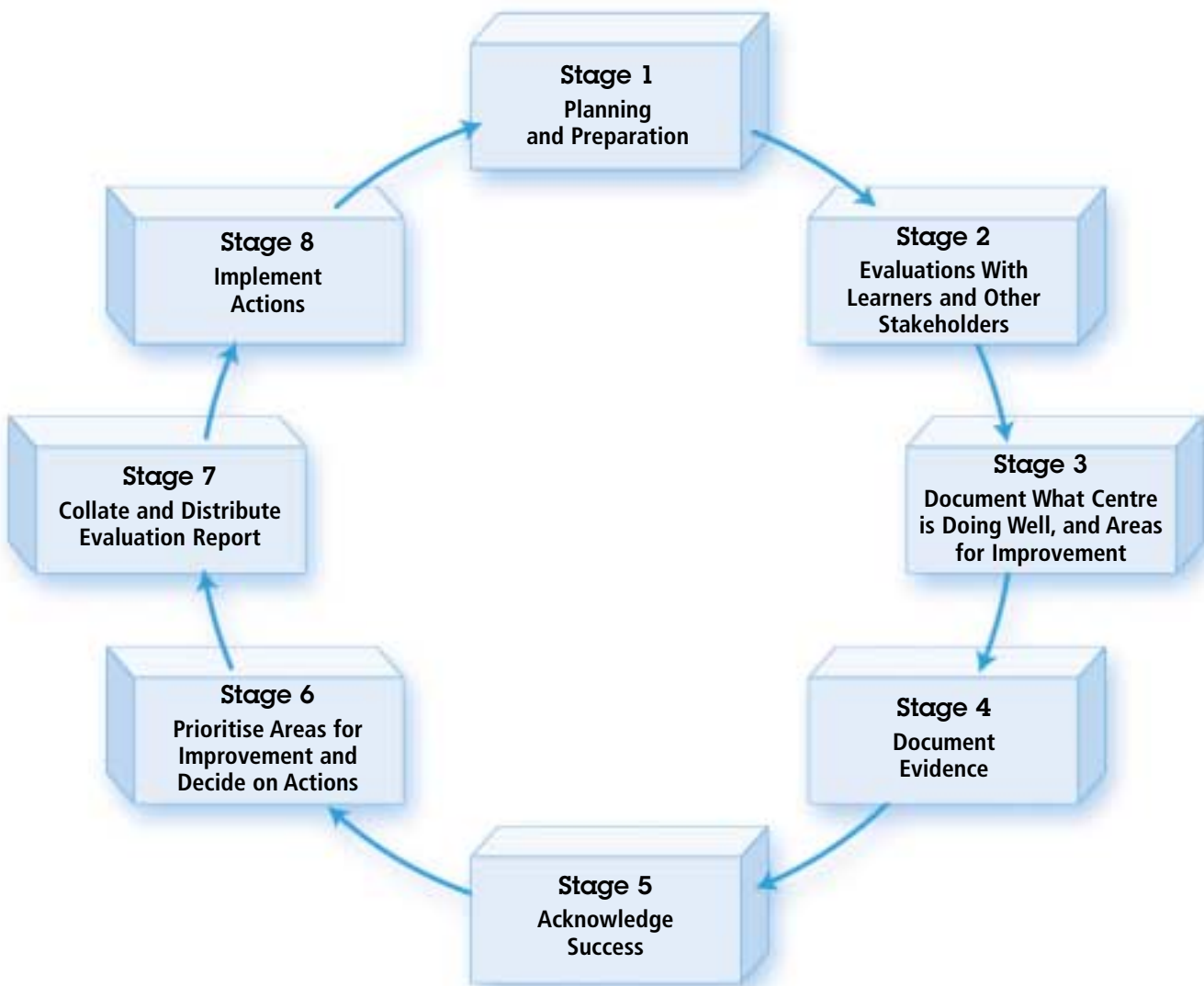
Key Stages of  
the Evaluation  
Process



**INTRODUCTION**

The guidelines outlined in this document propose one particular model of evaluation. The process is outlined in the diagram below. Detailed guidelines in relation to each stage are outlined in the following pages.

**The Evaluation Process:**





### STAGE 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION

A certain amount of planning and preparation work is required in an effort to ensure that the evaluation session is a worthwhile and positive experience for all participants. There are a number of tasks that should be carried out in advance of the process and they are outlined below.

- Establish a pre-planning team
- Select a Facilitator
- Identify areas to be evaluated
- Revise/ draw up list of evaluation criteria
- Decide who will participate/ when/ where
- Gather evidence
- Plan Evaluation sessions for learners and other stakeholders
- Document an outline of programmes, activities and levels of learner participation for the previous year

#### **Establish a pre-planning team**

A pre-planning team consists of 3-5 people who come together to carry out a number of tasks as outlined above. The pre-planning group usually consists of the centre Director/ Co-Ordinator and a number of other staff but could also involve a member of management. The formation of a pre-planning team encourages wider ownership of the process among staff. The team can be established 3-6 months in advance of the evaluation session so as to allow for the completion of the tasks outlined above.

#### **Select a Facilitator**

Each centre and VEC will be provided with a list of trained facilitators. Facilitators can be selected from this list and booked preferably at least three months in advance of the evaluation process. This allows time for the facilitator to clarify any issues relating to the process and provide sufficient time for staff to prepare for the evaluation session. Factors to consider when selecting a facilitator include:

- a centre's previous experience with a facilitator
- referrals from other centres
- the facilitators' distance from the centre

If a centre staff had a positive experience with a particular facilitator it may be appropriate to engage the same facilitator again. If for any reason the particular approach or style of a facilitator did not suit the centre it may be appropriate to select someone new. It can be useful to ask other centres that have engaged in the QFI to recommend a facilitator from the list. It can be useful to discuss any issues or concerns with the facilitator in advance of the evaluation session.

Another important consideration is the facilitator's distance from the centre. Because facilitators travel costs are based on Teacher Education Section rates, the overall cost of engaging a facilitator can increase significantly if a facilitator has to travel long distances and claim for overnight maintenance allowances. It is therefore advisable to select someone nearby.

#### **Identify areas to be evaluated**

The pre-planning team should carry out a survey involving staff and other key stakeholders when deciding the priority areas for evaluation. Only evaluate areas where some progress has been achieved. Staff may be tempted to select an area for evaluation in order to highlight the fact that nothing has been done in a particular area. If it is not already in place there is nothing to evaluate. For example if there are no Health and Safety procedures in place there is no sense in selecting this as an area for evaluation. A process of strategic/ centre development planning is a more useful approach to

identifying and planning the implementation of any quality areas that have not yet been established.

It is recommended that centres taking part in an annual evaluation for the first time select approximately 9 areas for evaluation. With experience, centres may wish to increase the number of quality areas that are evaluated over a two-day annual evaluation session. As stakeholders become accustomed to the process and overcome associated fears they can actually work through far more areas over a two-day period.

The areas to be evaluated should be decided on well in advance of the evaluation session. Some centres prefer to make such decisions **3-6 months in advance of the session** as this gives centre staff ample opportunity to gather evidence in relation to the quality areas that are being evaluated. A form that may be used by a staff team when selecting and prioritising areas for evaluation is outlined in Appendix F. Staff should also refer to the *Quality Standards* document in order to inform their decision.

### **Identifying common areas for evaluation across a VEC system**

Areas for evaluation can be selected by the common agreement of stakeholders across a number of centres within a VEC system. This would require centre representatives to come together with management to discuss issues and agree areas for evaluation.

The purpose of approaching the selection of Quality Areas in this way is to facilitate the co-ordinated development of centres at local level. Generally, actions arising from an evaluation session include the development of policies and procedures or staff development and training. If, for example, a number of centres were to identify that they needed training in the area of Equality Legislation this training could be co-ordinated by local management and could lead to the development of a common Equality Action Plan. This approach attempts to avoid duplication of work and also ensures consistency of practice across all centres within a VEC scheme.

This approach does not necessarily mean that all centres need select the same 9 areas for evaluation. Stakeholders may only decide to select a certain number of common areas leaving centres free to evaluate other areas specific to an individual centre.

### **Revise/ draw up list of evaluation criteria**

#### **For centres that have not completed a Centre Development Planning Process**

The main evaluation criteria to be examined during the evaluation session have been documented in relation to each quality area and are outlined in Appendix E. These evaluation criteria are of a general nature and therefore the pre-planning team may wish to add to this list in order to make the evaluation more specific to the procedures and systems that are already in place in the centre. The evaluation criteria worksheets have space to add some additional criteria in advance of the evaluation session.

#### **For centres that have completed a Centre Development Planning Process**

An annual evaluation session is an ideal time to evaluate the implementation of actions arising from a Centre Development Planning process. The Centre Plan is usually completed in April/ May of any given year. Following this a number of actions are implemented and after approximately one year an Internal Centre Evaluation process occurs. This gives stakeholders an opportunity to examine progress made, identify any actions that did not occur and make amendments to the plan if necessary.

When centres engage in a Centre Development Planning process the action plan sets out actions that are to be implemented over a specific timeframe. In relation to each action a number of evaluation criteria are also documented in the plan. These evaluation criteria are used during an evaluation process to evaluate the implementation of each of the actions.

The evaluation criteria for each action should be documented on the blank Evaluation Criteria Worksheets (page 102). Use a separate Worksheet for each action.

If a large number of actions were to be implemented in a given year it may take the full two-day session to evaluate the implementation of actions. If a smaller number of actions were planned in a given year there may be time to evaluate additional quality areas other than those set out as actions in the Centre Plan. The additional areas selected for evaluation may include the evaluation of Quality Areas that need immediate attention by the stakeholder group or the evaluation of specific programmes delivered within the centre. It is not advisable to evaluate areas that have been documented as actions in the Centre Plan but which are not yet due for implementation.

The facilitator or the Quality Framework Co-Ordinator will be in a position to advise centres on the number of areas that should be selected for evaluation. It is important that adequate time is given for each area and it can be frustrating for participants if they feel rushed through the process.

### **Decide who will participate/ when/ where**

The pre-planning team should decide when the evaluation would take place and select a suitable venue (see page 14). Internal Evaluation sessions normally occur during May- July as this is seen as the end of the academic year. It is important to include the full staff team, if possible, therefore efforts should be made to arrange the session prior to the departure of staff who may take annual leave from the end of May. Alternatively, some centres prefer to look at their year in terms of a calendar year; therefore the Internal Centre Evaluation Session could take place in January to reflect on the previous year.

### **Gather evidence**

One of the main tasks that needs to be carried out is the gathering of evidence which will be required for the evaluation session. Evidence comes in many forms and various types of evidence can be used to demonstrate that quality standards are being met. If a centre has selected 9 areas to evaluate, the members of the pre-planning team may decide to divide the quality areas between them, with each person collating evidence in relation to one or two quality areas. Some of the evidence may already exist, for example, statistics on learners recorded in a database, or a list of staff training days that occurred during one particular year of the programme. Most of the Quality Areas set out requirements for the development of a centre policy or written set of procedures. These documents form evidence that can be produced during an evaluation session. Other forms of evidence may have to be collected and this may involve carrying out a survey or examining centre records for new information.

Members of a pre-planning group will be aware that this task can become very time-consuming, particularly where centres do not have efficient systems of record keeping in place. In order to overcome this problem the members of the group should agree the number of days/ hours that they can reasonably allocate to this task, bearing in mind that the core activities of the centre should not be adversely affected by the additional workload. It is not necessary that evidence be gathered in relation to every single evaluation criteria. Sometimes the evaluation session highlights the lack of evidence relating to a particular area. This is generally because there is a great deal of work to do in relation to a particular Quality Area. A detailed list of evidence that may be collated in relation to each Quality Area is outlined on pages 23-26.

### **Plan Evaluation sessions for learners and other stakeholders**

Evaluations sessions with learners and other stakeholder groups should take place prior to the two-day evaluation session. The planning team should decide when the evaluation with learners will take place and who will facilitate this process. Detailed guidelines regarding the involvement of learners are outlined in Section Three.

The planning group may decide to ask other stakeholders to evaluate various aspects of the programme. Further information in relation to the involvement of various stakeholder groups is outlined on pages 11-12.

### **Document centre programmes, activities and levels of learner participation for the previous year**

An annual evaluation process involves the examination of a number of Quality Areas specifically focusing on centre performance over the previous year. It makes no sense to reflect on a year of work without also examining some basic facts and figures about learner participation, completion rates and the key activities and programmes delivered by the centre over the previous year.

The information required can be broken down into three main headings as follows:

- Programme**
- Overview of programme and supports provided in centre
  - Outline of both certified and non-certified programmes
  - Overview of key activities/ events that took place over the year (may include photos and quotes from learners)
  - Reports from teachers in relation to each subject area

- 
- Trainees**
- number of trainees in centre/ ages/ male & female ratio
  - number who started during the year
  - number who left/ where they progressed to
  - numbers who completed courses (certified and non-certified)
  - numbers that availed of guidance, counselling or who had home visits

- 
- Staff**
- List of teachers- subject areas, hours/week
  - Details of staff development/ training days held
  - Number of new staff employed
  - Number of staff support sessions held

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This information can be presented to staff at the start of the evaluation session and it provides useful information, much of which stakeholders may not have been aware or may have forgotten over the year. Learner completion and participation rates can also be used as evidence and are required for FETAC Evaluation Reports with regard to FETAC certified programmes. Once collated, this information will form a large part of the Annual Report for the VEC. As with other aspects of the pre-planning work, this task should be divided up among members of the pre-planning team. Collating this information would become an easier task if centres established a systematic approach to recording key information particularly through the use of an IT based system.

### **STAGE 2: CARRY OUT EVALUATIONS WITH LEARNERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS**

Following the planning stage one of the first actions involves conducting evaluations with learners and other stakeholder groups if required. Evaluation with learners can be approached in many ways and detailed guidelines for various evaluation activities are outlined in Section Three.

Evaluation may also take place with members of management particularly if they are unable to attend the Evaluation Session. Depending on the areas being evaluated it may be useful to carry out evaluations with parents, employers or community representatives. A sample questionnaire for management is outlined in Appendix C. The use of a questionnaire may not be suitable in all cases and therefore an interview type approach could be used. A list of possible interview questions that may be used in an evaluation with parents is outlined in Appendix D. Centres are encouraged to develop questionnaires and evaluation processes that may better suit consultation with any of the stakeholder groups.

For further information on the involvement of various stakeholder groups refer to page 11 of these guidelines under the heading “Who can be involved?”

### STAGE 3: DOCUMENT WHAT THE CENTRE IS DOING WELL AND THE AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Evaluation involves a process of examining what is in place in the centre compared to what should be in place. The quality standards and evaluation criteria describe, in general terms, what should be in place in centres. This information can be used as a basis for discussion and will assist stakeholders in teasing out the key issues relating to each quality area. The evaluation criteria are simply a series of pointers that help stakeholders to think about what they are doing well, and the areas for improvement in relation to each quality area. The criteria are used to create an expectation of what constitutes a quality centre and therefore form the basis for comparisons to be made.

**Each of the evaluation criteria should prompt one or more comments to be documented under the headings “what we are doing well” and/or “areas for improvement”.**

During the evaluation session this information is usually recorded on flip-chart paper, as the information recorded will be examined by the full group on a number of occasions during the two-day session. An example of how this information may be laid out is outlined below.

For this exercise, participants are generally split into three groups. Each group evaluates approximately three quality areas, allowing 30 minutes for each area. Feedback is given to the full group where all stakeholders will have an opportunity to comment or make changes.

#### SAMPLE LAYOUT FOR RECORDING EVALUATION FINDINGS

Quality Area: Trainee Induction		
WHAT WE ARE DOING WELL	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	EVIDENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Staff have agreed and documented induction structure</li> <li>■ New induction structure was implemented according to plan</li> <li>■ Trainee level of satisfaction with induction very satisfactory overall</li> <li>■ Staff level of satisfaction with trainee induction very satisfactory, and big improvement on previous structure</li> <li>■ Greater parental involvement achieved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Need to extend induction period as it was too intense for trainees</li> <li>■ Need to include more staff in induction process</li> <li>■ Some trainees still not clear about subject choices at end of induction period</li> <li>■ Need to add some additional information on Health and Safety in each subject area</li> <li>■ Not all parents signed the trainee discipline procedures form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Induction Procedures</li> <li>■ Trainee Induction Booklet</li> <li>■ Induction Plan</li> <li>■ Trainee questionnaire results</li> <li>■ Staff questionnaire and opinions expressed during staff meeting and evaluation session</li> <li>■ List of parents attending</li> <li>■ Discipline forms in files</li> </ul>

#### STAGE 4: DOCUMENT EVIDENCE

Across the programme nationally it is clear that each centre has developed its own particular system of record keeping. While all centres appear to have similar systems in place in terms of administration and financial records there is much more diversity in the way centres record information relating to the other key areas of the programme. Guidelines from the Vocational Support Services Unit (VSSU) are available which outline some of the documentation that should be maintained in centres. As systems for record keeping become more developed the process of gathering evidence will become easier. Very often staff in centres are aware that certain programmes, practices or procedures are in place but are not documented. One of the actions arising from an evaluation session may be to establish ways of recording essential aspects of the work that takes place in centres. Having such systems in place is useful for a number of reasons. It clarifies procedures for staff and learners and the local management as well as meeting the requirement to be transparent and accountable in terms of using resources.

In advance of the evaluation session the pre-planning group will have gathered a certain amount of evidence in relation to each of the quality areas being evaluated. More evidence will be generated during the evaluation session based on feedback from the learners and opinions expressed by the participating stakeholders.

#### Evidence can be Quantitative or Qualitative in nature

Quantitative (can easily be expressed by numbers)
■ Numbers of trainees in centre/ completing programme/ progressing/ dropping out
■ Numbers of participants achieving certification at various levels
■ Numbers of trainees receiving counselling/ home visits/ additional supports
■ Incidence of serious discipline problems
■ Number of staff participating in training/ staff development days
■ Number of PR events/ opportunities during the past year
■ Number of Health and Safety checks taken place in past year
■ Number of participants satisfied with programme content (from survey results/ questionnaire)
Qualitative (attitudes, beliefs, experiences, impressions, understandings)
■ Feedback-report on trainee level of satisfaction with programme
■ Stakeholder views expressed during evaluation session
■ Staff surveys

#### EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE

The table below sets out examples of evidence in relation to each quality area. **Stakeholders should not see this as an exhaustive list nor should they feel the necessity to have all of these in place in a centre.** In general, the evidence outlined in the table is quantitative. More qualitative evidence can be generated through the use of questionnaires or surveys relating to any of the quality areas, as well as through opinions expressed during the evaluation session. Qualitative evidence can be turned into quantitative evidence by scoring the response to surveys or questionnaires. The evidence should relate to the year that is being evaluated.

## Examples of Evidence

Section One: Organisational Management	
1. Ethos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mission statement, aims &amp; objectives</li> </ul>
2. Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Centre Development Plan</li> <li>■ Annual timetable</li> <li>■ Minutes of planning meeting</li> </ul>
3. Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evaluation report</li> <li>■ Notes from preplanning meeting</li> </ul>
4. Communication and Links with the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ List of groups /organisations in the community that the centre has formed links with</li> <li>■ Communications Policy and Procedures</li> <li>■ Number of home visits/ meetings with parents that took place over past year</li> <li>■ Number of hours per week allocated to home liaison and community links</li> <li>■ Document number/ regularity of staff meetings that took place over past year</li> <li>■ Document number of opportunities that were taken to communicate formally with the following groups: parents, trainees, VEC, regional co-ordinators, other key local organisations/ bodies</li> </ul> <p><i>NOTE: Formal communication includes sending on a report, inviting group to a meeting, attending a regular meeting, doing a presentation to one of the groups, sending out a letter to a group (e.g. parents) for information purposes.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Carry out survey / brief questionnaire with any or all of the groups outlined above on levels of satisfaction re. communication</li> </ul>
5. Transparency, Accountability and Public Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of PR events that occurred in past year</li> <li>■ PR Strategy</li> <li>■ Learner survey- awareness of entitlements</li> <li>■ Signage</li> <li>■ Monthly/ annual report</li> </ul>
6. Administration and Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Administration support in place in centre</li> <li>■ Procedures in relation to key administration functions</li> <li>■ Administration records</li> </ul>
7. Record Keeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Learner files</li> <li>■ Staff files</li> <li>■ Administration files</li> <li>■ Secure storage</li> </ul>

## Examples of Evidence

<b>Section One: Organisational Management (continued)</b>	
<b>8. Health and Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Health and Safety Statement and Procedures</li> <li>■ Number of training days for staff and learners on H&amp; S, number of fire drills, how often it was an item on agenda for staff meetings</li> <li>■ End of year report from safety officer</li> </ul>
<b>9. Premises</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Centre cleaning &amp; maintenance programme</li> <li>■ Survey learner, staff, management and visitor on satisfaction with accommodation</li> </ul>
<b>10. Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Stock book</li> <li>■ List of equipment in place for each subject area</li> </ul>
<b>Section Two: Personnel and Development</b>	
<b>11. Staff Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Roles and responsibilities of each staff member documented</li> <li>■ Staff clear in relation to role</li> <li>■ List of opportunities for staff to work as a team / engage in teambuilding activities</li> </ul>
<b>12. Staff Recruitment and Induction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recruitment Policy, procedures and records</li> <li>■ Code of Conduct for Staff</li> <li>■ Outline of Induction Programme</li> </ul>
<b>13. Staff Development and Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of staff development / training days that occurred during the year</li> <li>■ Opportunities for staff to make recommendations re. staff development and training</li> <li>■ List of staff qualifications/ training</li> </ul>
<b>14. Staff Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support system in place</li> <li>■ Staff satisfied with support system</li> </ul>
<b>Section Three: Learning Environment</b>	
<b>15. Social Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Code of Behaviour</li> <li>■ Child Protection Policy</li> <li>■ Health Promotion Programme</li> <li>■ Learner survey- satisfaction with learning environment</li> </ul>
<b>16. Code of Behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Minutes of meetings where discipline procedures were agreed/ documented</li> <li>■ Document training given to new staff re. discipline</li> <li>■ Copy of signed Code of Behaviour in each learner file</li> </ul>



## Examples of Evidence

<b>Section Three: Learning Environment (continued)</b>	
<b>17. Equality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Equal Opportunities Policy in place</li> <li>■ Training provided for staff</li> <li>■ Code of practice for dealing with complaints of bullying or harassment in place</li> </ul>
<b>18. Interculturalism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Centre Programme</li> <li>■ Centre policies</li> <li>■ Staff training</li> </ul>
<b>Section Four: Programme</b>	
<b>19. Programme Development and Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Policy and procedures for programme development and review</li> <li>■ Initial assessment procedures and outcomes</li> <li>■ Survey learners - to assess value of programmes delivered in centre and how they meet the trainee's needs</li> <li>■ Timetable- weekly &amp; annual</li> <li>■ Programme plans from each teacher</li> </ul>
<b>20. Recruitment of Learners and Admission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recruitment dates, numbers recruited, where did they come from (what schools/ organisations referred them)</li> <li>■ Document how often induction occurs, who is involved, what is covered</li> <li>■ Posters, application forms, referral forms</li> <li>■ Admission Policy and Procedures</li> </ul>
<b>21. Initial Assessment, Induction and Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Initial assessment procedure</li> <li>■ Survey trainees' level of satisfaction with the induction programme. (as part of the general questionnaire or a questionnaire specifically on this topic, or interview a number of trainees for feedback)</li> <li>■ Induction Booklet</li> <li>■ Individual learning plan for each learner</li> </ul>
<b>22. Learning, Assessment and Certification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Assessment Policy and Procedures Information leaflet for learners</li> <li>■ Individual learning plan</li> <li>■ Certification records</li> <li>■ Appeals Procedure</li> </ul>
<b>23. Support Structures for Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of counselling &amp; guidance hours provided over the year</li> <li>■ Number of trainees referred to/attended the services</li> <li>■ Number of home visits</li> <li>■ Survey staff and trainees to find out knowledge of / attitude to the provision of these services in the centre</li> <li>■ Number of learners availing of childcare support</li> </ul>

## Examples of Evidence

Section Four: Programme (continued)	
<b>24. Literacy and Numeracy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Literacy/ Numeracy Plan</li> <li>■ Number of hours spent on literacy provision/ week/ month</li> <li>■ Number of trainees who received additional 1:1 support, how often</li> <li>■ Number of trainees who had literacy assessment</li> <li>■ Number of trainees who were measured for the progress that they made in relation to literacy</li> <li>■ Document number of staff who have received training in literacy work</li> </ul>
<b>25. Social Personal and Health Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Centre Programme</li> <li>■ Timetable</li> <li>■ Initial assessment procedures</li> <li>■ Individual learning plans</li> </ul>
<b>26. Work Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Procedures for Work Experience</li> <li>■ List of potential employers who have agreed to take trainees on work experience</li> <li>■ List of placements</li> <li>■ Survey trainees/ staff on level of satisfaction with various aspects of work experience</li> </ul>
<b>27. Transfer and Progression</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Policy and Procedures for Transfer and Progression</li> <li>■ Progression routes documented</li> <li>■ Procedures for managed progression of learners from centre</li> <li>■ Links to progression options</li> </ul>

**STAGE 5: ACKNOWLEDGE SUCCESS**

One of the most enjoyable aspects of an evaluation session is taking time to acknowledge the success that has been achieved by the learners, staff and management. Most of the first part of evaluation sessions is spent discussing and recording the achievements of the centre. Very often evaluation teams skip over this part and move straight into the next part of the session that looks again at the areas where improvement is needed.

The evaluation session is a unique opportunity in the annual cycle of a centre's activities to take the time to acknowledge success. This can be a motivating experience and is especially so if words of appreciation come from local management or the Centre Director/ Co-Ordinator. The need to be appreciated is a deep-rooted human trait. Studies show that appreciation is the single biggest identified need among employees. Appreciation builds self-esteem and when self-esteem is high, team morale is high.

Some people have difficulty believing positive feedback and may even feel uncomfortable giving it. Praise is most effective when it is genuine. At this stage in the process an evaluation team usually finds itself sitting in a room with walls covered in flip chart paper that documents not only the success of the centre but also a list of evidence that proves that this success is real.

One of the comments documented during the Consultation Phase of the Quality Framework Initiative from a member of staff goes as follows:

“I welcome evaluation. It gives us an opportunity to give ourselves a pat on the back. It is also very important that we don’t keep this good news to ourselves. We should write it down and let others know about our professionalism and high standards.”

As part of the two-day session the facilitator will engage the group in an exercise that will involve acknowledging the success of the centre.

#### STAGE 6: PRIORITISE AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND DECIDE ON ACTIONS

At this stage in the process the evaluation group re-examines the “areas for improvement”. When this list is first documented, every recommendation made by every individual is included. The group needs to take a second look at the list of areas for improvement in order to examine priority areas and focus on realistic outcomes.

In practical terms the group will read through the areas for improvement listed on the flip chart paper, identify and prioritise key areas and decide on specific actions to be taken, as well as identifying dates for implementation of actions and the names of staff that will be involved. This information will, most likely, be documented on flip chart paper. An example of how this information may be documented is outlined below.

#### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND ACTIONS - LAYOUT OF FEEDBACK

Quality Area: Induction of Learners			
AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	WHEN/BY	BY WHOM
Need to extend induction period as it was too intense for trainees	Revise induction, content and implementation	19th December	Induction Focus Group: Pat, Deirdre, Kevin, Mairead
Need to include more staff in induction process	As above		
Some trainees still not clear about subject choices at end of induction period	Arrange meeting with Group 1 to look at subject choices	10th September	Mairead
Need to add some additional information on Health and Safety in each subject area	Decide on Health and Safety content required and give this information to Induction Focus Group	15th November	Peter
Not all parents signed the trainee discipline procedures form	Check trainees’ files for parent’s signature and follow up with home visits.	8th September	Ellen

### STAGE 7: COLLATE AND DISTRIBUTE AN ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

As evaluation occurs on an annual basis in centres, the guidelines outlined here refer to an Annual Evaluation Report. The function of a report is to make the programme more accessible to people who are not directly involved as well as being a useful and important account of the work that takes place in the centre over a certain period. Documenting the work is extremely affirming for staff and over time the information clearly shows the centre's development.

#### Who is the audience?

The report has a number of uses. It provides valuable information for the Co-Ordinator/ Director, staff and learners, particularly with regard to the decisions that were made during the evaluation process and the short-term actions that were planned.

It can also be used to inform the VEC and the Board of Management of the key issues relating to the programme including the programme's strengths, areas for improvement and in particular where it needs the support of the VEC or Board.

Under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 providers of programmes will be required to carry out, at specified intervals, an evaluation of its programmes and related services. The provider will be required to send a copy of the evaluation report to the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). FETAC may make recommendations for improvement, which the provider shall implement. Part of the information contained within the centre's annual evaluation report could be included in the report required by FETAC. Further information in relation to the evaluation of FETAC programmes is available on the FETAC website.

#### Proposed Content and Structure

1. Title
2. Acknowledgments
3. Contents
4. Executive Summary
5. Centre Mission Statement
6. Centre Aims and Objectives
7. Outline of the Evaluation Process
8. Background Information/ Statistics
9. Main Body of the Report (outcomes of the evaluation session)
10. Conclusions/ Recommendations

#### Background Information/ Statistics

In order to provide a complete picture of centre activities over the period of a year, it is useful to set the outcomes of the evaluation session in context. In order to do this it is useful to provide a range of factual information about the centre. This information provides backup to the evidence documented during the evaluation session. However, this information is generally quantitative in nature and may include the areas outlined below as well as any other relevant information.

The collation of such information can be carried out by the pre-planning team for distribution to participants during the evaluation session.

- Programme**
- Overview of programme and supports provided in centres
  - Outline of both certified and non-certified programmes
  - Overview of key activities/ events that took place over the year (may include photos and quotes from learners)
  - Reports from teachers in relation to each subject area
- 

- Trainees**
- number of trainees in centre/ ages/ male & female ratio
  - number who started during the year
  - number who left/ where they progressed on to
  - numbers who completed courses (certified and non-certified)
- 

- Staff**
- List of teachers- subject areas, hours/week
  - Details of staff development/ training days held
  - New staff employed
- 

### **Main Body of the Report**

This part of the report outlines the areas that were evaluated, together with the outcomes of the evaluation process. It includes information on what is being done well in each area, areas for improvement, feedback from learners and a list of actions to be implemented over the following year arising from the evaluation. Most of this information will be collated by the facilitator and will be made available to the centre Co-Ordinator /Director on disc so that it can be added to the evaluation report.

### **STAGE 8: IMPLEMENT ACTIONS**

Following the Evaluation session each member of staff and management should receive a copy of the evaluation report. The action plan within the report sets out actions that are to be carried out during the following 6-12 months. Responsibility for each action is documented together with a timeframe for implementation.

The Co-Ordinator/ Director should discuss the action plan with the staff team following the evaluation session to ensure that staff are familiar with the actions and discuss the best way to approach implementation. Some actions will be the responsibility of an individual member of staff while others require the formation of a sub-group of staff members. It is important that sub-groups appoint a leader or facilitator who ensures that meetings of the sub-group take place and that decisions are documented.

Dates should be set for follow up meetings. These could take place as part of the normal staff meeting schedule or separate meetings could be organised.

Management may be involved in the implementation of actions, particularly in relation to the organisation of training at VEC level or the development of policies. Management should be up-dated in relation to the implementation of actions.

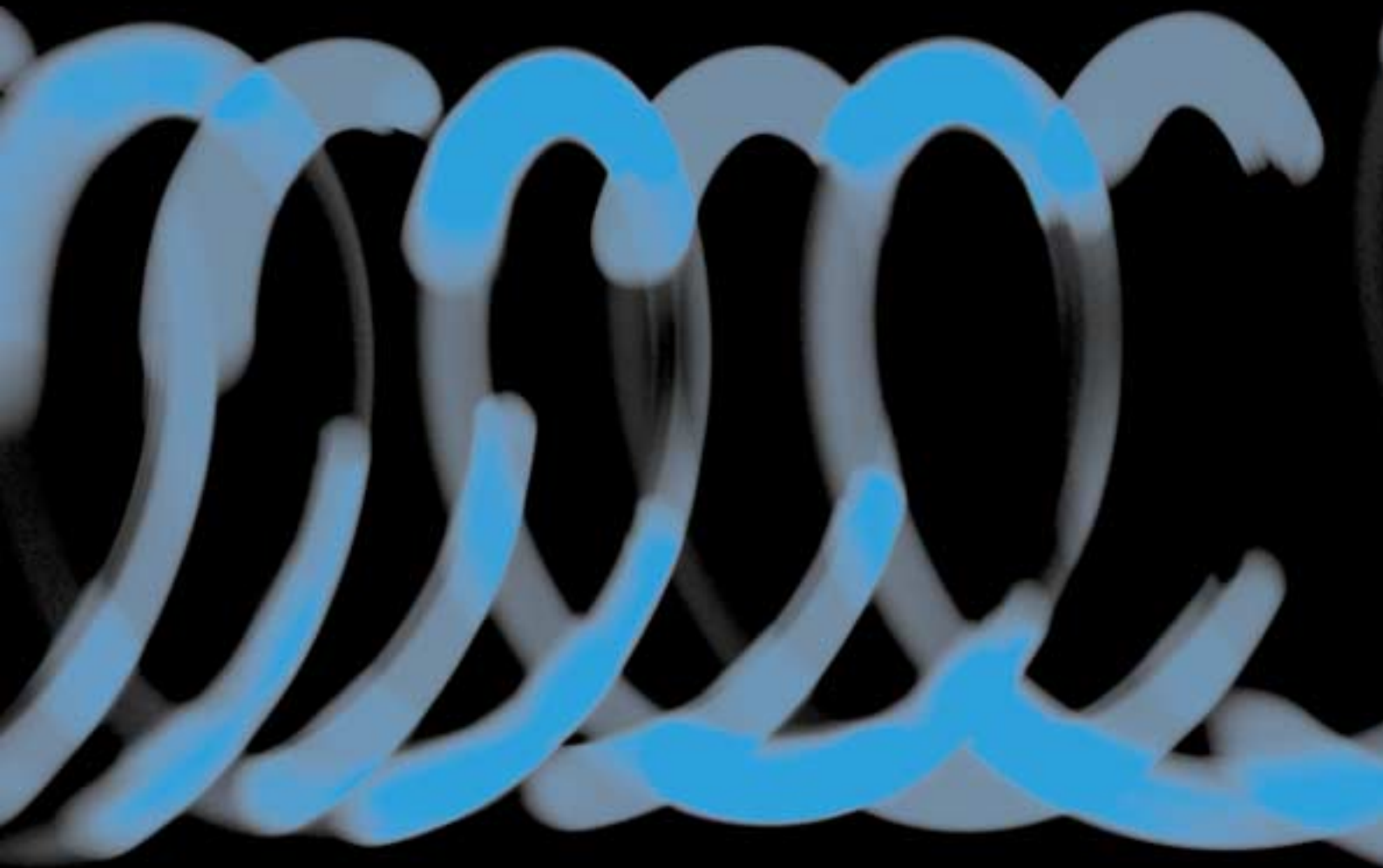
The overall implementation of the action plan will be examined as part of the next annual Internal Centre Evaluation session.



# 3

## section three

Evaluation  
By Learners



## Introduction

Centres exist specifically to provide education and training for learners. In one sense learners are “clients” of the service being provided and as such they should have opportunities to evaluate aspects of programme provision.

### Evaluation by learners is important at two levels:

- Firstly it provides centre staff with information that can feed into the improvement in the service that is provided.
- Secondly it encourages learners to participate in a process where their views are not only considered to be important but they are also acted upon. This experience can empower the learners involved and increase their sense of importance and belonging within a centre.

## Planning an Evaluation Session

Before holding an evaluation session/s with learners there are a number of issues to consider. The evaluation session/s may differ from group to group and from year to year. The important thing is that the staff receive “real” feedback from learners and that the process is a positive experience for the learners involved. It is important that the learners are introduced to the reasons behind the evaluation process and are also given feedback following the evaluation process.

## Things to consider

### ■ Safety for the learners

It is not unusual for learners to be suspicious of an evaluation activity. They may fear negative consequences for giving “honest” answers. They may feel that the process is tokenistic and that staff would never take their opinion seriously. Learners can be reassured by participating in exercises that highlight the importance of learner evaluation and explain how the feedback will be used.

Safety can also be created by agreeing that the feedback will be relayed to the staff team as feedback from the group rather than from individuals. This idea can be promoted by asking learners not to put their names on completed questionnaires. The discussion session can begin with the drawing up of a set of rules. Not only can this set out learner behaviour for the session it can also include agreements from the teacher about confidentiality.

### ■ Learners’ age and ability

The age range within YOUTHREACH and Senior Traveller Training Centres is very broad. Centre staff should select methodology that is appropriate to the age of the learner. While it is widely recognised that young people enjoy games, energiser activities and more active methods of engagement they also enjoy discussion groups. Adult learners often enjoy the active methods of participation. Try out different approaches to see what activities work best in your centre.

The literacy levels of learners will vary and it may be appropriate to use activities that do not require learners to read or write. Some teachers use the questionnaires as worksheets in a literacy class. A range of options is outlined in this section but teachers are also encouraged to develop their own tools and approaches.





### ■ Overall approach

As suggested above, the methodology best suited to the evaluation process is one that actively involves the learners. It is important to engage learners in a discussion about the term “evaluation” and perhaps ask them to evaluate an experience or product that they bought. It is important that learners understand what they are being asked to do. Teachers will have to explain certain terms. Very often learners will give an answer that they think the teacher may want to hear. If this occurs teachers should encourage learners to give reasons for their answers.

This section of the guidelines does not outline the normal group activities that can be used as “warm-ups,” energisers, focusing activities or closing rounds. These activities are well known to many teachers and are widely documented. It is recommended that these approaches be used as appropriate at the start, during and at the end of the evaluation session/s.

It may be appropriate to hold one or more sessions with learners. Some teachers will want to conduct an evaluation, for example, as part of a Personal Development class. The first session may involve an introduction to the topic, the next session may involve conducting the evaluation and the third session may involve giving feedback to learners.

### ■ Focus of the evaluation

The staff may want to receive general feedback on the centre performance or may want to focus the feedback in relation to a number of key areas. The questionnaires in this section are used for feedback of a general nature.

If more focused evaluation is required, a more specific set of questions will have to be drawn up. An example of this would involve the evaluation of a particular aspect of programme provision such as the Leaving Certificate Applied or the Work Experience Programme. Centre staff could draw up specific questions relating to the learners’ experience of the programme. The results would provide staff with more focused and perhaps more useful information. A staff team that is evaluating nine quality areas may want to question learners on any of the nine areas that relate to learners’ experience of the programme. The results can also be used as evidence of learner satisfaction.

## Who will engage with learners and how many will be involved?

The learner evaluation may be conducted by one or more members of staff depending on the size of the group. It may be conducted as part of a normally timetabled class or learners may be brought together into a large group for the evaluation session/s. Evaluation occurs on an annual basis and therefore it is ideal if all the learners attending the centre at a given time can participate in the process. Because the number of learners in centres is relatively small this is usually not problematic.

It is generally not recommended that learners who are new to the centre would engage in evaluation unless this was appropriate; for example, the evaluation of the recruitment and induction process for learners.

Occasionally, an individual from outside the centre is engaged to facilitate the evaluation session. This may be useful particularly as the “outsider” may be viewed as impartial and someone with whom the learners can be “honest”. On the other hand, this individual may not be familiar enough with the centre to ask probing questions and to really get to the root of problems. The final decision is really a matter for the staff team.

## How the information will be used?

The feedback from learners should be collated and documented in a form that is easily accessible to the staff team. The feedback may be quantitative (based on questionnaires) in nature and therefore presented as percentages or numbers. The feedback from discussion groups may be presented as key findings or recommendations.

The feedback will be presented to the staff team during the feedback session. Staff will acknowledge the areas where learners are satisfied and may agree actions based on the areas for improvement.

Agreed actions are included in the (short term) action plan. Learners are informed of the actions that are to be taken as a result of the learner evaluation.

## How will learners be provided with feedback on the evaluation results and agreed actions?

Once the evaluation is concluded the facilitating teacher/s collate the findings and return to the learners with the overall results. Learners will be interested to know how their opinion related to the opinion of the rest of the group and it is important to let the learners know the nature of the information that is being fed to the staff team. The facilitating teacher should check with the learners as to whether they are satisfied with the collated results and whether they wish to add any final comments.

Following the staff ICE session the actions for improvement based on the learner evaluation are outlined for learners. This is a great opportunity to let learners know that their opinion matters and that staff are taking their views seriously.

As actions are implemented it is also important to inform learners of these developments.

# Evaluation Activities

## Introduction

The following activities have been tested with learners of various ages. Please view these as possible tools and suggestions rather than “the” way to run an evaluation session/s.

**This section contains the following activities:**

- Activity 1**     **Introduction to Evaluation**
- Activity 2**     **Why Ask Learners to Evaluate?**
- Activity 3**     **Why do Centres Exist?**
- Activity 4**     **Learners Develop a Quality Checklist**
- Activity 5**     **Evaluation - Using Evaluation Questionnaires**
- Activity 6**     **Learner Evaluation - Without Using Questionnaires**
- Activity 7**     **Opinion Finders**
- Activity 8**     **Programme Evaluation by Learners**

## Activity 1: Introduction to Evaluation

**Purpose:** Introduce the learners to the concept of evaluation and quality

**Discussion:** Evaluation is about...

Discuss the notion of evaluation with the learners. Help them to think in terms of the following: Evaluation involves looking at your experience of something and deciding...

- What is good about it?
- What is bad about it?
- How could it be done better?

### Exercise Part A: How to Evaluate a Product or Service

Ask learners to think about the kind of service they might expect to find in a fast-food restaurant. This section could be photocopied or written up on a whiteboard or flipchart. It can be completed individually or by the group.

What kind of service do you expect when you go for a meal in a fast-food restaurant (chipper)?

Place a tick to show the kind of service that you would expect

CHECKLIST FOR QUALITY	PLEASE TICK
Welcoming atmosphere	
Red carpet entrance	
Warm room	
Clean and comfortable	
Friendly staff	
Musician playing music at your table	
Choice of food on the menu	
Quick service	
Free bottle of champagne with your meal	
Tasty food	
Value for money	
Foot massage during meal	
Clean toilets	

Select some learners to feed back. Agree the list of things that they would expect to find if they were having a meal in a restaurant. Agree what expectations are unrealistic.

### Discussion

- Discuss the importance of having expectations of something before being able to evaluate it, for e.g. it was easy to evaluate the meal experience because the learners knew what kind of service they should get in a fast food restaurant.
- Discuss the importance of having realistic expectations. Explain that there is a limit to what the restaurant can provide and that this often has to do with money.
- Discuss the fact that a service can be improved by the actions of the staff.

### Exercise Part B

Break the learners into small groups of three to four. Ask each group to evaluate the quality of some product or service that at least one of them has experienced. The group can then draw up the checklist and the individual/s who experienced the product or service can evaluate it.

Examples: a visit to the cinema, a pair of trainers, shopping in a particular supermarket, a wedding in a hotel, the service at a crêche etc...

1. Select product or service to be evaluated.
2. Draw up a check list of all the things that they expect from the service or product.
3. Evaluate the service or product based on the checklist.
4. Decide if the product or service is of a high, medium or low quality.
5. Suggest ways in which the product or service could be improved based on their evaluation.

## Checklist for Quality

CHECKLIST FOR QUALITY	PLEASE TICK

**Rate Product/Service:**

(PLEASE TICK)

High Quality     

Medium Quality  

Low Quality       

**How can the product or service be improved?**

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## Activity 2: Why Ask Learners to Evaluate?

**Purpose:** To look at reasons why learners should be encouraged to take part in evaluation exercises.

### Exercise A: Ideas Avalanche

Tell the learners that they are being asked to evaluate the work of the centre. Ask them what this means, using an ideas avalanche (formerly called brainstorming). Write down everyone's suggestions, to value them, even if they do not seem appropriate. Once all ideas are gathered discuss what it means to evaluate the work of the centre.

### Exercise B: Why ask learners?

Ask the group to think about the reasons why centre staff would ask learners to evaluate the programmes and services provided to learners? Use the following exercise to tease out the arguments for and against the evaluation of programmes and services by learners.

Learners are asked to stand at one end of a room (tables and chairs are cleared to make room for movement). A list of statements (as outlined in the table below) are read out by the teacher. After each statement is read out the learners are asked to move to one of three places in the room depending on if they agree with the statement, disagree with the statement or don't know how they feel. The teacher indicates where the three places are located (agree and disagree are usually at opposite ends with don't know in the middle).

The learners move to the place that represents their views. After everyone has moved the teacher asks some learners to give reasons for their choice, including the "don't knows".

At the end of the exercise the teacher should reinforce the importance of learner evaluation and outline what the staff of the centre will do with the information gathered from the learners following an evaluation.

### Table of Statements

- Learners have a right to evaluate programmes and services provided for them.
- Learners don't care about the kinds of programme and services provided by the centre because they are only here for the money.
- Learners have good ideas about how things can be done better.
- Staff are not interested in finding out what learners think.
- Learners don't know enough about the centre to give an opinion.
- It is important that staff know how learners feel about being in the centre.
- The learners are lucky to have a place in the centre and should be happy with whatever is provided.
- The centre can only improve its service if learners tell staff what's good and bad about the centre.
- Learners should never question their teachers.

A demonstration of learners taking their place on the floor

DISAGREE



DON'T KNOW



AGREE



## Activity 3: Why do Centres Exist?

**Purpose:** To help learners to think about the purpose of the centre. This exercise will prepare learners for the next exercise.

**Exercise:** Why do YOUTHREACH Centres/ STTCs exist?

Break learners into groups and discuss the reasons why the centre was set up. What purpose does it serve? Write answers on flip chart paper. Each group reports back to the larger group.



## Activity 4: Learners Develop a Quality Checklist

**Purpose:** Learners are helped to think about the detail of the service provided in centres and through this exercise they are in a better position to evaluate the service.

**Exercise:** Develop a Quality Checklist

Ask the learners to write up a quality checklist for the centre in the same way that they carried out their previous exercise (p37) on a selected product or service. The same template can be used for this exercise.

In order to do this exercise learners should ask themselves:

- What kinds of activities should be happening in a centre?
- What kind of services and supports should be offered?
- What should be in place for the centre to run well?
- What should be in place for the centre to be a good place for learners?
- What kind of things would the staff ask the trainees to evaluate?

The teacher can take feedback on the flipchart/ white-board from the entire group. The checklist should be documented in a similar manner to the previous checklists.



## Activity 5: Evaluation - Using Evaluation Questionnaires

### Introduction

This exercise can follow on from the previous exercise if appropriate.

The teacher informs the group that a questionnaire has been worked out that will allow the learners to say what they think about each point on the quality checklist and even a few more areas that the learners probably had not thought about. The teacher informs the group that they will get a chance to fill in the questionnaire and by doing so they are taking part in an evaluation of the centre.

A Sample questionnaire is outlined on page 50. Staff may wish to use it as it is or make changes to make the questions more relevant to the centre. There are a number of ways in which the questionnaire can be used. A number of options are outlined below.

### Exercise: Evaluation Questionnaire

The questionnaires can be completed individually or by a group.

### Individual Feedback

Learners can be asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire lists a number of positive statements relating to various aspects of the service provided for learners. The learners are asked to respond by indicating if they agree or disagree with the statement. Learners have a choice of three responses as follows:

**AGREE**

**DISAGREE**

**DON'T KNOW**

For learners with literacy difficulties, the teacher may carry out interviews with learners on an individual basis. In this case the teacher marks the selected response or assists the learner to do so.

### Advantages of using individual feedback methods

- Allows for one-to one discussion
- The learner may provide more honest answers without peer pressure
- Less confident/ less talkative learners can express opinions
- Allows for a wide variety of opinions to be expressed

### Disadvantages of using individual feedback methods

- More time consuming than group evaluation
- Results have to be collated

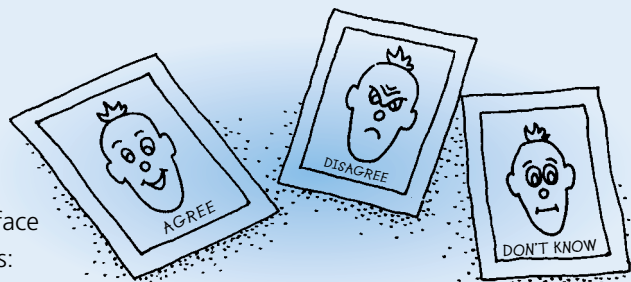
## Group Feedback

### Option A: Group discussion

The learners are given copies of the questionnaire and the teacher reads out each statement, asking the group to respond. Through discussion and debate the group agrees an answer for each question and this is recorded. The teacher can ensure all learners participate by asking individuals to give reasons for the response. This is a consensus decision making process.

### Option B: Face Cards

Another useful and sometimes more engaging approach is the use FACE CARDS. Each learner in the group is given 3 cards. Each card has a different face representing the three possible responses:



**AGREE**

**DISAGREE**

**DON'T KNOW**

When the teacher reads out a statement from the evaluation questionnaire all of the learners are asked to hold up a card that will indicate their response. This allows all participants to respond without being influenced by what others have said. The teacher gets an overall sense of how the group feel and can then count the number of learners that agreed or disagreed to determine the overall response. The teacher can select various individuals to say why they responded as they did and allow for debate and discussion where responses vary.

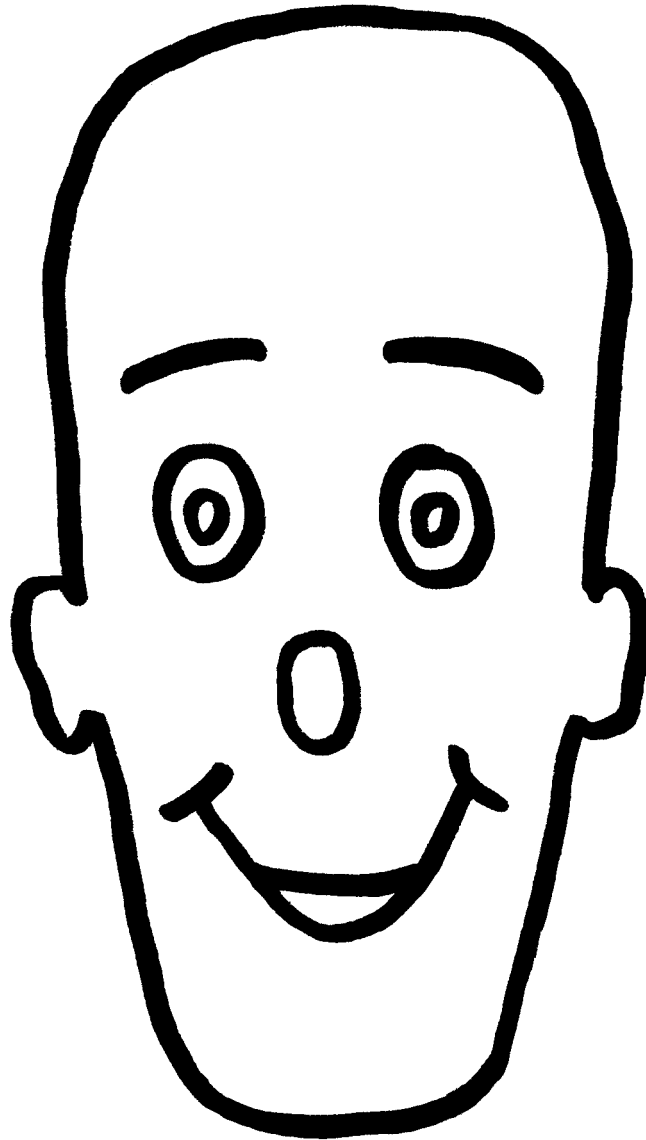
Templates for FACE CARDS are included in this document. They should be photocopied on to card. It is better if a different coloured card is used for each face. In this way the learners and the teacher can get an immediate feel for the response of the group.

### Advantages of using group feedback methods

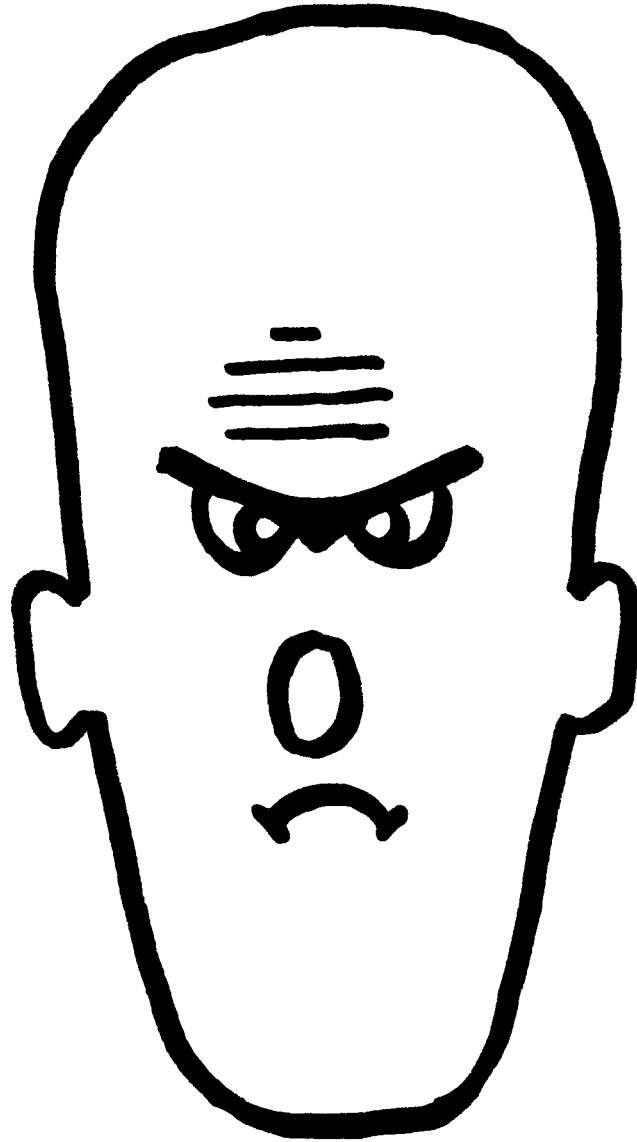
- Allows for an interactive process
- Allows for discussion and debate
- In consensus decision making scores do not have to be collated
- Using FACE cards makes it easy to collate scores

### Disadvantages of using group feedback methods

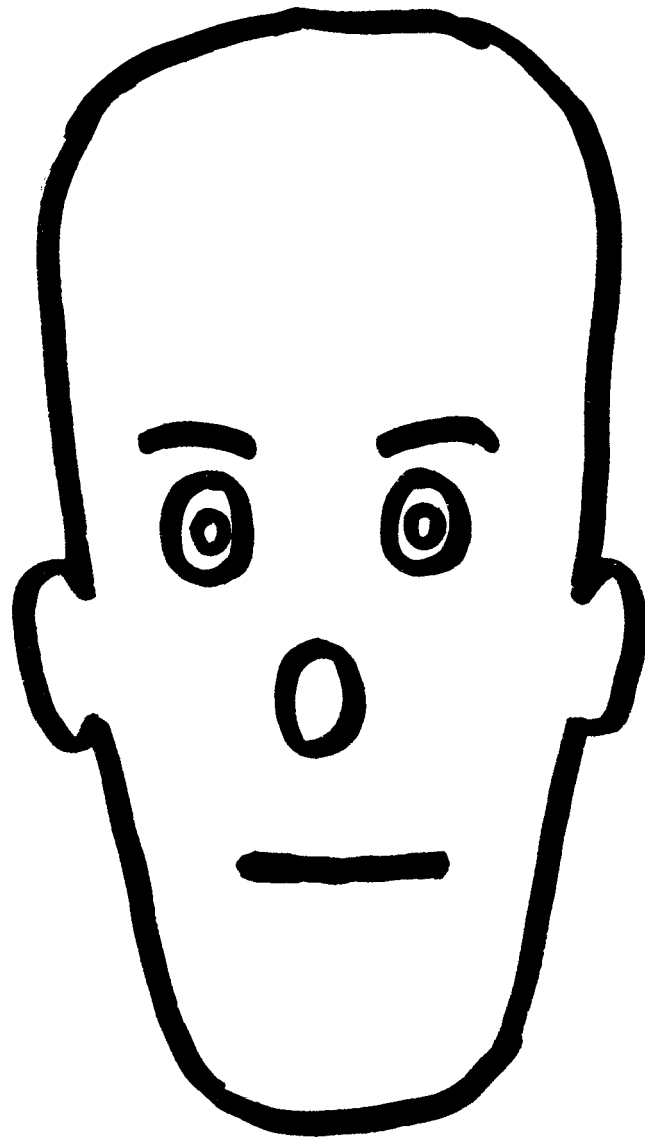
- Learner feedback may be influenced by peers opinion (the use of FACE CARDS may eliminate this possibility)
- Less confident learners may not want to speak out in a group



**AGREE**



**DISAGREE**



**DON'T KNOW**

## Activity 6 : Evaluation - Without Using Questionnaires

### Introduction

The evaluation questionnaire is a useful tool when asking learners to focus on specific areas of interest to staff. For centres that may not wish to limit the potential feedback from learners it may be more appropriate to engage in exercises that ask general and open ended questions. This kind of approach normally involves discussion and group work exercises. A number of exercises are outlined below. These may be used individually or combined to make up a full session.

### Exercise: Personal Experience of the Centre

**Purpose:** To look at what learners enjoyed and disliked about their time spent in the centre. This exercise can be useful to help learners to start thinking about what they like and do not like about the centre. It can be used as an introductory exercise.

#### Option A:

**Learners are asked to think about their time in the centre and to write down a list of good things that happened to them since they started and a list of negative/ unpleasant things that happened to them during their time in the centre. Each learner gives feedback to the group.**

#### Option B:

**Alternatively each learner can draw two pictures, one representing the positive experiences in the centre and one representing the negative experiences that they had in the centre. Each learner explains the drawings to the group.**

### Exercise: Feedback by Discussion

The teacher asks learners to break into small groups of 3-4. Each group is given an issue or question to discuss. After an agreed length of time one learner gives feedback for each of the groups. The teacher may ask that notes be taken by the learners. The teacher takes notes of the learners' feedback on a flip chart. This is important as learners can see that their opinion was documented. The issues or questions may be selected from the list below or teachers can develop ideas of their own.

#### Option A

**Ask each group to say what is good / bad about the centre?**

### Option B

**Ask each group to say what they think about a particular issue or theme (keep it broad). These are just a few examples.**

- The course offered in the centre
- Individual learning plans
- Feedback from teachers
- Are the centre rules kept?
- Are you learning new things all the time?
- Teachers give us praise
- Has your reading and writing got better since you started?
- Work Experience
- Is this centre too much like school?
- Has being in this centre made a difference to your life?
- What is it like to be a learner in this centre?
- Are learners treated with respect?

### Option C

**Ask groups to finish the sentences. These are just a few examples. Teachers should ask questions specific to their own centre.**

- This centre is good because...
- I feel bored in the centre when...
- I think that this centre will give me chances to...
- The things I hate about the centre are...
- My family think the centre is...
- I am happy here because...
- I am not happy here because...
- The things that would make this centre better are...
- If I have a problem in the centre I usually...
- My image of the centre before I started was...
- This centre is like school because...
- This centre is different to school because...
- Teachers show respect for learners by...
- This centre deals with bullies by...
- I think that the teachers in the centre care about me because...
- The teachers in the centre think that I am...

## Activity 7: Opinion Finders

**Aim:** To engage learners in an evaluation process where the learners gather the information.

### Exercise:

Each of the learners in a group is given a sheet of paper with a different statement written at the top. Beneath the statement is a grid for recording learners' opinions about the statement. Learners can agree or disagree or can say they don't know.

Make sure that the learners understand the statement that is written on their sheet. The learners should move around the room asking each person in the group to give his/her opinion. Learners can give and collect opinions simultaneously. As a learner asks a question he/she has to ensure that each response is recorded in the correct grid.

Encourage everyone to give their opinion on each statement. The learner asking the question can note comments from trainees or the teacher can use this section to take note of learners' comments particularly if a discussion follows the exercise.

This exercise does require a good level of literacy from the learners but it is an excellent way of involving learners in the collection of information. The scores for each statement are totalled and this information can be collated and fed back to the annual ICE session. The statements used for this exercise can be taken from the evaluation questionnaire or developed by the teacher. A sample template for this exercise is outlined below.

### Adaptations

This exercise can also be carried out by sticking the statement sheets to the wall and asking learners to go around to each statement and place a tick next to their opinion.

STATEMENT		
Teachers in this Centre listen to me		
Agree		5
Disagree		15
Don't Know		6
COMMENTS:		
[Empty box for comments]		



## Opinion Finders Sample Template

STATEMENT		
	TICKS	TOTAL
Agree		
Disagree		
Don't know		
COMMENTS:		

## Learner's Evaluation Questionnaire

### PLEASE NOTE:

This is a sample - centres should prepare their own based on the priority areas that are being evaluated.

Please show your level of agreement with each of the statements by circling a number.

This is what the numbers mean.

1=strongly disagree    2=disagree    3=agree    4=strongly agree

1. I felt welcomed into the programme.	1	2	3	4
2. The atmosphere in the centre is warm and friendly.	1	2	3	4
3. The centre has a nice appearance.	1	2	3	4
4. The centre is tidy and clean.	1	2	3	4
5. The teachers treat me with respect.	1	2	3	4
6. The subjects are interesting.	1	2	3	4
7. I am learning and growing in confidence.	1	2	3	4
8. The teachers have worked out a learning plan with me.	1	2	3	4
9. I regularly have a chance to discuss my progress with teachers in the centre.	1	2	3	4
10. I am clear about the rules of the centre.	1	2	3	4
11. I think the teachers make sure the rules are kept.	1	2	3	4
12. I get a lot of encouragement from teachers.	1	2	3	4
13. My parents are happy that I am in this Programme.	1	2	3	4
14. I think that I will go on to another education/ training programme after I finish.	1	2	3	4
15. I get on well with the other trainees.	1	2	3	4
16. The centre is well organised.	1	2	3	4
17. Classes start on time.	1	2	3	4
18. I am proud to be in this centre.	1	2	3	4
19. I am happy with the qualifications I am able to get in this centre.	1	2	3	4
20. There are plenty of trips and outside activities organised for us.	1	2	3	4
21. I am able to see the counsellor as often as I like.	1	2	3	4
22. I am getting all the help I need with reading and writing.	1	2	3	4
23. The staff really listen to me here.	1	2	3	4
24. This centre is well known in the local community.	1	2	3	4
25. I always get lots of notice if there are days off or trips planned.	1	2	3	4

## Activity 8: Programme Evaluation by Learners

### Introduction

Centre Staff may invite learners to evaluate or review programmes or modules delivered in the centre. These exercises are useful because they:

- a) contribute to programme improvement, ensuring that the programme remains relevant to the needs and interests of the learner group;
- b) meet aspects of the Further Education and Training Awards Councils (FETAC) quality assurance requirements as outlined in the Qualifications Act 1999.

There are many ways to engage learners in an evaluation of programmes. The methods used may involve the use of questionnaires, interviews or representative groups. In fact, many of the activities outlined in the earlier part of this section could be adapted for the purpose of engaging learners in the evaluation of programmes. A number of sample questionnaires are outlined in this section. Teachers of each module or subject area should develop a learner evaluation questionnaire at programme design stage. The evaluation usually focuses on the usefulness and suitability of the programme content and the methodology used.

The information gathered as part of this evaluation can be used by the teacher to improve the course/ module, which can only make the learning experience better for both the teacher and the learner.

### How often should learners evaluate programmes?

Each teacher would carry out the evaluation at set times, during or at the end of the course/ module depending on what is most useful and appropriate.

### Feeding Learner Evaluation into a Programme Review and Programme Evaluation (for FETAC)

The information collated from the learners' evaluation of programmes can feed into an official review of programmes by staff. This might occur on an annual basis and involve staff delivering each programme. The feedback from learners will help staff to ensure that the programme content and delivery were at an appropriate level for learners. This information can be used by staff to improve the programme and ensure its on-going relevance for learners.

Programme review occurs more often than a full evaluation of a FETAC programme by staff. Programme evaluation may involve gathering information from a number of programme reviews and a number of learner evaluations. It is important to demonstrate that the evaluation of programmes by learners is an on-going feature of programme development and delivery within the centre rather than something that just occurs every few years, when a programme is being evaluated by staff.

### What would the learner evaluate?

- The course content and its relevance/interest to the learner
- The delivery the course/ module
- The overall organisation of the course/ module

### Evaluation of course content

The sample questionnaires below outline the content of the course/ module. Learners cannot be expected to remember the entire content of the course when it comes to doing the evaluation therefore having a list of the areas covered can be useful. It is also a good idea for learners to have their course workbook / folder close to hand as this will help them to remember the handouts, activities and exercises that made up part of the course/ module. Please note these are samples only. Each teacher should develop a questionnaire for each module or subject area.

#### Course Title: Personal and Interpersonal Skills

COURSE CONTENT	Tick the areas you felt were interesting/relevant
Self Awareness	
Choices	
Personal Achievements	
Who Am I?	
My Skills	
My Hopes	
My Fears	
Personal Plan of Action	
Personal Rights	
Personal Responsibilities	
My Identity	
What Influences my Identity?	
How I Make Decisions	
Decision Making Styles	
Consequences of my Decisions	
Communication Skills	
Passive Communication	
Assertive Communication	
Aggressive Communication	
Listening Exercises	
Guidelines for Good Communication	
Dealing with Conflict	
How do I Deal With Conflict?	
Dealing With Feelings	
Solving Problems	
Journal	

## Course Title: Personal and Interpersonal Skills

Think about the different ways you learned over the past year in this course.  
Please rate the following ways of learning from 1-10.

**NOTE:**

- Favourite way of learning gets a 1.
- Least favourite way of learning gets a 10.

The different ways of learning that happened in this class	Your Score
Teacher talking in order to give you information	
Class discussion	
Role play	
Interviewing people outside class	
Worksheets	
Speakers from outside	
Relaxation exercises	
Listening exercises	
Parents comments	
Videos	

## Overall Organisation of Course/Module

Please Note: The results of this survey are for the teacher's information only

Please circle  your answer

AGREE ←————→ DISAGREE

### THE TEACHER

Explained things clearly	5	4	3	2	1
Gave me help when I needed it	5	4	3	2	1
Made the subject interesting	5	4	3	2	1
Listened to what learners said	5	4	3	2	1
Made sure everyone took part	5	4	3	2	1
Gave learners feedback on progress made	5	4	3	2	1
Classes were well organised	5	4	3	2	1

### THE COURSE

Covered areas of interest to me	5	4	3	2	1
Was easy to follow and understand	5	4	3	2	1
Was relevant to my own experiences	5	4	3	2	1
Involved exercises were interesting to do	5	4	3	2	1
Helped me improve my skills	5	4	3	2	1

### ARRANGEMENTS

The rooms were comfortable	5	4	3	2	1
There was enough space to work	5	4	3	2	1
Classes were the right length	5	4	3	2	1

### OTHER COMMENTS:



# 4

## section four

Incorporating  
FETAC  
Programme  
Evaluation into  
the Internal  
Centre  
Evaluation  
Process

## INTRODUCTION

Evaluation of programmes by staff can occur as part the annual evaluation process if required. Any programme can be evaluated following the key stages outlined on page 16. Programmes such as the Leaving Certificate Applied or the Junior Certificate can be evaluated, as well as uncertified programmes such as a Trans-National Experience, a Summer Arts Programme or an Enterprise Programme. Because programme evaluation is a FETAC Quality Assurance requirement all centres providing FETAC certified programmes will have to engage in programme evaluation and forward an evaluation report to FETAC. The evaluation of FETAC programmes can also occur as part of the normal Internal Centre Evaluation process.

## EVALUATION OF A FETAC PROGRAMME

These guidelines relate to programme evaluation if the YOUTHREACH / STTC is the named provider. Each of the eight key stages of the Evaluation Process should be followed as with the evaluation of any other Quality Area. Stakeholders should become familiar with the FETAC Quality Assurance Documents as follows:

- Quality Assurance in Further Education and Training: Policy and Guidelines for Providers (v1.1)
- FETAC Self Evaluation Checklist
- Programme Evaluation Report (template)
- Programme Improvement Plan (template)

In order to complete a programme evaluation stakeholders will have to complete a Self Evaluation Checklist, Programme Evaluation Report and Programme Improvement Plan.

## KEY STAGES IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The stages in the evaluation process remain the same as for the evaluation of any other quality area. Specific points for consideration when evaluating a FETAC programme are set out below:

### Step 1. Planning and Preparation

- **Identify Area to be Evaluated:** Decide what programme is being Evaluated; for example it could involve the evaluation of a complete FETAC Foundation Level Programme or a combination of similar programmes at Level One.
- **Complete the Evaluation Checklist:** Apart from evaluating the programme itself, FETAC also asks providers to complete an Evaluation Checklist covering 9 areas of policy and procedure. This checklist should be completed in advance of the Evaluation Session. Centres may wish to refer to previous evaluations of these Quality Areas in order to complete the Evaluation Checklist. The FETAC Policy areas are outlined in the table below together with the corresponding Quality Areas in the QFI.



FETAC Quality Areas corresponding with QFI Quality Areas	
FETAC AREAS OF POLICY AND PROCEDURE	QFI QUALITY AREAS
■ <b>Communications</b>	■ Communications and Links with the Community
	■ Initial Assessment, Induction and Review
■ <b>Equality</b>	■ Equality
■ <b>Staff Recruitment and Development</b>	■ Staff Recruitment and Induction
	■ Staff Development and Training
■ <b>Access, Transfer and Progression</b>	■ Recruitment of Learners and Admission
	■ Transfer and Progression
	■ Equality
	■ Support Structures for Learners
■ <b>Programme Development, Delivery and Review</b>	■ Programme Development and Delivery
	■ Record Keeping
	■ Premises
	■ Equipment
	■ Health and Safety
	■ Work Experience
■ <b>Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners</b>	■ Learning Assessment and Certification
■ <b>Protection for Learners</b>	■ Programme Development and Delivery
■ <b>Sub-Contracting/Procuring Programme Delivery</b>	
■ <b>Self Evaluation of Programmes and Services</b>	■ Evaluation

- **Revise / Draw up List of Evaluation Criteria:** Evaluation Criteria are set out in the Programme Evaluation Report. These questions are open to change. Stakeholders should therefore review the questions being asked in the Programme Evaluation Report and make changes if necessary. Suggested Evaluation Criteria which providers may use are outlined on pages 99-100. Further changes can be made to these Evaluation Criteria by the provider if appropriate.
- **Decide Who Will Participate:** All members of staff involved in delivering the programme being evaluated should be involved. Any questions relating to the organisation of the evaluation session can be discussed with the facilitator or the Quality Framework Co-Ordinator.
- **Gather Evidence:** In completing the Evaluation Checklist, evidence has to be documented in relation to each of the following areas and recorded on the Evaluation Checklist Form.

1. Communications
2. Equality
3. Staff Recruitment and Development
4. Access, Transfer and Progression
5. Programme Development, Delivery and Review
6. Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners
7. Protection for Learners
8. Sub-Contracting / Procuring Programme Delivery

Further evidence should be collected in relation to the programmes being evaluated. This evidence can include feedback from learners, employers or community representatives. It can also include facts and figures on learner participation, achievements and completion rates. Evidence relating to the evaluation of the programme/s should be collated for examination during the evaluation session. The task of collecting evidence can be divided between the members of the pre-planning team.

- **Plan Evaluations with Learners and Other Stakeholders**

Much of the information collected by individual teachers during programme reviews should be brought to the evaluation session including the outcomes of the Evaluation of Programmes by the Learners. Because Programme Reviews and Learner Evaluation occur on a more regular basis than Programme Evaluation stakeholders should collate the key findings from these processes for presentation during the evaluation session.

- **Document an Outline of Programmes, Activities and Levels of Learner Participation for the Previous Year**

The outline of programme activities should include a detailed outline of programme delivery timeframes as well as any assessment and certification dates. Details of learners participating in FETAC certified programmes as well as completion rates should be documented and examined during the evaluation session.

Normally the Internal Centre Evaluation Process looks at centre performance over the previous year. FETAC has stated that the maximum period between evaluations will be five years but more regular evaluation is preferred. The frequency of evaluations is to be set out in a provider's evaluation procedure. Stakeholders may wish to evaluate programmes on an annual basis but if it is to occur less frequently then information on each of the years being evaluated should be collated and examined during the evaluation session.

## **Step 2. Evaluation by Learners and Other Stakeholders**

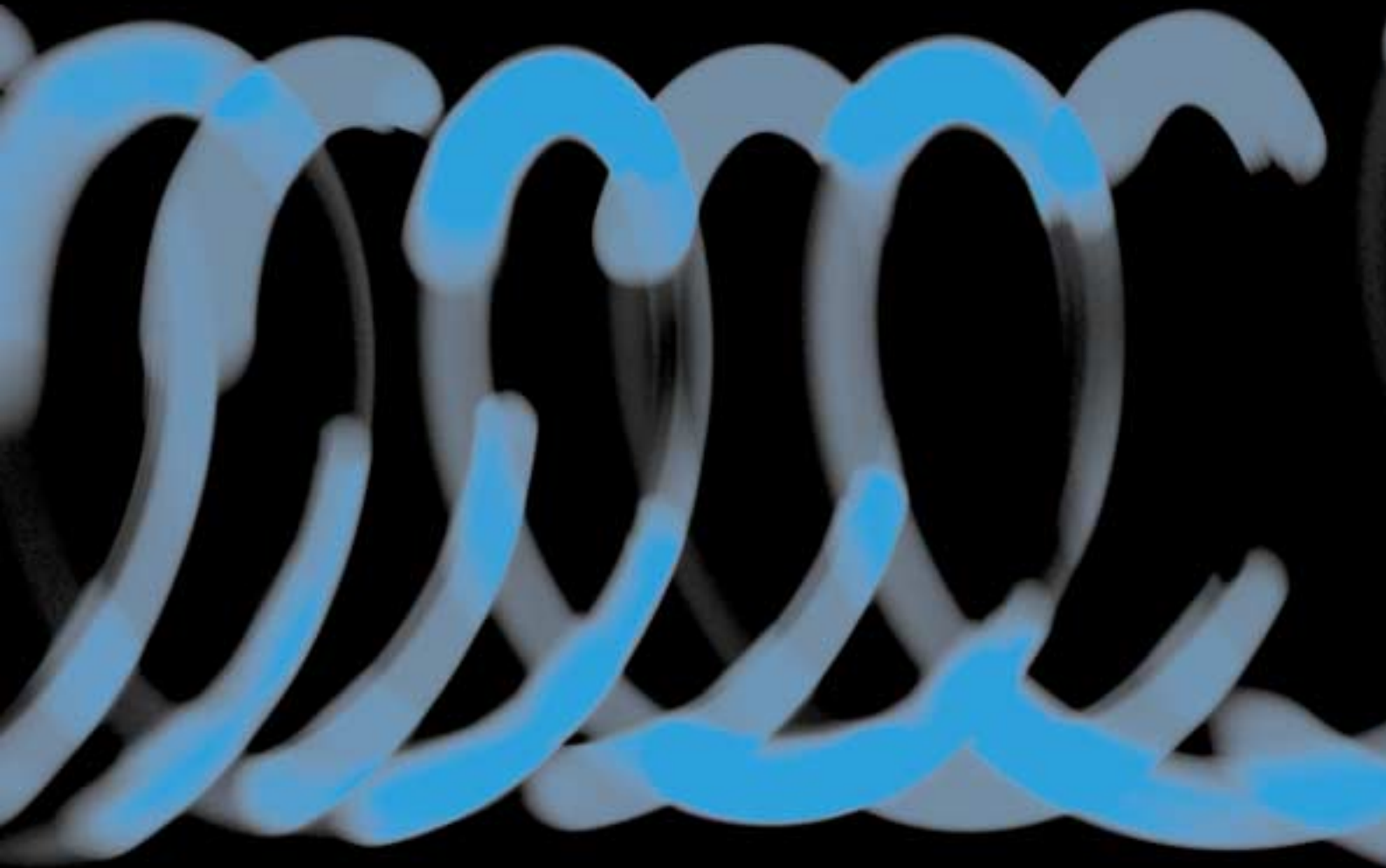
Because learner evaluation of programmes occurs on a regular basis as part of the review process there is no need to carry out a specific evaluation with learners at this stage. Findings from the on-going evaluations can be collated and presented during the evaluation session. Guidelines on the evaluation of programmes by learners are outlined on pages 51-54. Evaluation with selected stakeholder groups may occur as required.

## **Step 3. Document What the Centre is Doing Well and Areas for Improvement**

This step occurs as normal using the Evaluation Criteria for Programme Evaluation (pages 99-100). Participants in the evaluation session should document what the centre is doing well, areas for improvement and recommended actions. All of these points can be transferred to FETAC's Programme Evaluation Report template. The detail of the agreed actions (who will carry out action and when) can be transferred on to the FETAC Programme Improvement Plan.

## **Step 4-8 are carried out as normal**

# appendices



## Evaluation Session - Sample Timetable

### DAY ONE

9:00	Tea/ Coffee
9:30	Introductions and Background/ Centre's preparations for evaluation session.
9:40	Warm -up
9:45	Benefits / Advantages and Concerns / Fears of participating in annual evaluation session.
10:00	Ground Rules
10:10	Timeline - overview of year
10:20	Individual evaluation - 3 positive and 3 negative things about the year
10:30	Feedback to group
10:50	Outline structure of evaluation session, break up groups, divide tasks.
<b>11:00</b>	<b>Tea break</b>
11:20	Feedback from Learners
11:35	Working in groups, evaluate 9 quality areas outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What we are doing well</li> <li>■ Areas for improvement</li> <li>■ Evidence</li> </ul>
<b>1:15</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
2:15	Feedback from groups
4:00	Finish

### DAY TWO

9:00	Tea/ coffee
9:30	Feedback continued
10:30	Celebrate success
<b>11:00</b>	<b>Tea break</b>
11:20	Prioritise and plan actions (full group) Year planner: mark out holidays/ work experience/ big projects
<b>1:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
2:00	On flip chart, outline areas for improvement, action to be taken/ when/ by whom
3:30	Group Round: How everyone feels after 2 days
4:00	Evaluation of session: Questionnaire Finish

**EVALUATING THE EVALUATION SESSION**

Because a great deal of time and energy goes into an evaluation session it is important that the participants have an opportunity to evaluate the process. Facilitators will ask each participant to complete an evaluation sheet, which involves scoring various aspects of the facilitator's approach and of the evaluation process, and also allows for general comments. Completed questionnaires will be returned to the Quality Framework Co-Ordinator and will inform further improvements to the process.

## Evaluation Questionnaire

**Please complete this questionnaire, as your feedback will help to improve the evaluation guidelines and process.**

Centre Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

*To score each of the areas listed below simply circle the score.*

*1 = poor 2 = fair 3 = good 4 = very good 5 = excellent*

Facilitator	Score				
Introduction	1	2	3	4	5
Use of Energiser/ Game/ Icebreaker	1	2	3	4	5
Communication skills	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to encourage interaction	1	2	3	4	5
Listening skills	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to involve all participants	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of subject/ theme	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to clarify points	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to keep group focused	1	2	3	4	5
Confidence in facilitating process	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to motivate group	1	2	3	4	5
Overall planning	1	2	3	4	5
Time management	1	2	3	4	5
Closure	1	2	3	4	5

**Please add any other comments with regard to the facilitation of the process**

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In order to score the usefulness of each of the exercises / activities listed below please circle score.  
 1 = useless 2 = not very useful 3 = fairly useful 4 = very useful 5 = extremely useful

Content / Structure of the Session					
Background information on the Quality Framework	1	2	3	4	5
Advantages/ concerns of participating in evaluation session	1	2	3	4	5
Group contract	1	2	3	4	5
Timeline/ Review of year	1	2	3	4	5
Listing what you are doing well	1	2	3	4	5
Listing areas for improvement	1	2	3	4	5
Listing evidence	1	2	3	4	5
Celebrating success	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback to large group	1	2	3	4	5
Planning to address areas for improvement	1	2	3	4	5
Identifying when improvements will take place	1	2	3	4	5
Identifying who is responsible for action	1	2	3	4	5

Please comment on your overall experience of the evaluation process.

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Did you have an opportunity to make comments on all the areas that you wanted to? If not why?

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What do you recommend could improve the evaluation session?

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Any other comments:

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Thank you for your co-operation

## Evaluation Questionnaire for Management

*Please note: This is a sample only. Centre staff should develop questionnaires for management based on the Quality Areas selected for Evaluation in any given year.*

Complete this questionnaire with respect to the centre named below.

**Centre Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Centre Staff have selected 9 Quality Areas for evaluation during this year's Internal Centre Evaluation process. Please comment on each of the 9 areas outlined below with particular reference to the questions highlighted under each area.

### 1. Communication and Links with the Community

- Are you sufficiently informed in relation to the work of the centre?
- Do the centre Communications Policy and Procedures operate in line with VEC requirements?

Comments/ Recommendations:

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### 2. Administration and Financial Management

- Is the centre carrying out its administrative and financial management duties to the standards required by the VEC and the DE/S auditors?

Comments/ Recommendations:

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**3. Health and Safety**

- Is management satisfied with the centre Health and Safety Statement?
- Is the centre complying with Health and Safety Legislation?

Comments/ Recommendations:

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**4. Staff Recruitment and Induction**

- Do the procedures used by the centre in the recruitment of staff meet with the approval of management?
- What information should be included in the induction programmes of new staff from a VEC point of view?

Comments/ Recommendations:

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**5. Staff Development and Training**

- Do the centre Staff Development Policy and Procedures meet with the approval of the VEC?
- Is management satisfied with the manner in which staff development is prioritised and organised at centre level?

Comments/ Recommendations:

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**6. Recruitment of Learners and Admission**

- Does management approve of the awareness raising material used by the centre as well as the centre's overall approach to awareness-raising within the community?
- Do the centre policy and procedures on the Recruitment of Learners and Admission meet with the approval of management?

Comments/ Recommendations:

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**7. Literacy and Numeracy**

- Does the centre Literacy Plan meet with the approval of management?

Comments/ Recommendations:

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**8. Work Experience**

- Does the centre work experience programme comply with the requirements of the VEC?

Comments/ Recommendations:

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How can Management support the further development of the centre?

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Additional Comments or Recommendations

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## Evaluation Interview Questions for Parents

**Staff are encouraged to develop questionnaires or interview questions more appropriate to the issues within the centre.**

- Are you satisfied with your son's / daughter's progress in the centre?
- Do you receive enough information on your son's / daughter's programme and development within the centre?
- Do you receive enough information in advance of closed days, trips and holidays?
- Would you like opportunities to become more involved in your son's / daughter's development?
- Would you like more opportunities to meet centre staff to discuss issues in relation to your son / daughter?
- Do you feel that your son/ daughter is treated fairly within the centre by staff and other learners?
- How could the centre staff improve communication with you?

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 1: Ethos

**Quality Standard:** The ethos reflects the values and goals of stakeholders and informs the work of the centre.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A mission statement, aims and objectives are developed and documented in consultation with stakeholder groups.
2. The mission statement, aims and objectives are displayed in the centre and also included in relevant centre documentation.
3. Stakeholders are aware of and understand the ethos of the centre.
4. The centre ethos informs programme operation and policy development.
5. The mission statement, aims and objectives are reviewed every two years.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.

## Quality Area 2: Planning

<b>Quality Standard: Centres engage in a centre development planning process.</b>	
<b>Evaluation Criteria:</b>	
1.	The centre plan is based on the Quality Standards as well as the centre ethos.
2.	A centre plan is developed in collaboration with key stakeholders.
3.	The plan informs the work of the centre and its implementation is monitored and evaluated.
4.	
5.	
6.	
<b>Quality Standard: Short term planning occurs on a regular basis.</b>	
<b>Evaluation Criteria:</b>	
1.	Structured planning meetings occur throughout the year as required.
2.	An annual plan of work is outlined and submitted to management for approval on an annual basis.
3.	
4.	
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EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 3: Evaluation

**Quality Standard:** Internal Centre Evaluation occurs on an annual basis.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. Self evaluation policy and procedures are developed and documented.
2. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
3. The evaluation process involves key stakeholder groups.
4. The evaluation process and outcomes are documented in an annual report.
5. Learners evaluate relevant aspects of the programme as part of the annual evaluation process.
6. Areas for improvements are identified, actions are agreed and implemented.
- 7.
- 8.
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- 12.
- 13.
- 14.

## Quality Area 4: Communication & Links with the Community

**Quality Standard:** Communication systems are in place between all stakeholders as appropriate.

### **Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A communications policy is developed and documented.
2. Procedures for communication with learners, staff and other stakeholders are established and documented.
3. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
4. Regular/ appropriate communication occurs between the following stakeholder groups:
  - Staff and learners
  - Co-Ordinator/ Director and staff
  - Staff and VEC Management
  - Staff and Board of Management
  - Staff and parents/ guardians
  - Staff and National Co-Ordinators
  - Staff and relevant individuals/ organisations in the community to include education, training, welfare, justice, health, youth & community sectors.
  - Other centres in the region
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 5: Transparency, Accountability & Public Relations

**Quality Standard:** The centre conducts its activities in an open and transparent manner.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. The centre operates in line with national guidelines.
2. Learners are informed of their entitlements and choices available within the programme.
3. Procedures for all key aspects of the programme are developed with approval from local management.
4. General information in relation to the programme is available to the public.
5. Signs on the premises, correspondence and other relevant documentation highlight the sponsors of the programme.
6. A monthly and annual report is submitted to local management.
- 7.

**Quality Standard:** The centre engages in public relations work as appropriate.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A public relations strategy is developed and documented.
2. Opportunities are maximised to promote the work of the centre in the community, and nationally, as appropriate.
3. Training in public relations is provided to staff as appropriate.
- 4.
- 5.



## Quality Area 6: Administration & Financial Management

**Quality Standard:** Administration arrangements meet the needs of all stakeholder groups.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. The administration support is allocated as appropriate between the centre and the VEC Office.
2. The administration staff carry out the key administration functions relating to the programme.
3. Sufficient equipment and resources are provided in order to carry out all administration functions.
4. Clear procedures are in place in relation to all administration tasks.
- 5.
- 6.

**Quality Standard:** Finances are managed in a manner that meets the needs of the centre and is in compliance with national guidelines.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. The Co-Ordinator/ Director is provided with an approved budget for the programme.
2. Pay and non-pay budgets are effectively planned and managed by the Co-Ordinator/Director in conjunction with local management.
3. Supplies and services are ordered in accordance with the approved purchasing procedures of the VEC.
4. All necessary financial records are maintained.
5. Financial management systems are subject to external audit.
- 6.
- 7.

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE	
Quality Standard: Adequate insurance cover is in place to cover all activities of the programme.	
Evaluation Criteria:	
1.	Written confirmation of insurance cover is in place.
2.	Additional insurance cover for any new programme activities is sought and received prior to engaging in new activities.
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## Quality Area 7: Record Keeping

**Quality Standard:** Records relating to key aspects of the programme are maintained according to national guidelines.

### Evaluation Criteria:

1. Individual learner files are maintained to include information on contact details, outside centre supports, recruitment, initial assessment, individual learning plan, attendance, completion rates, payment, assessment, certification and progression.
2. Records in relation to staff are maintained to include recruitment details, contracts, claim forms, annual leave, sick leave, programmes of work and evaluations.
3. Records in relation to financial management are maintained.
4. Due care is taken to protect confidential information.
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EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 8: Health & Safety

**Quality Standard:** A safe and healthy environment exists in the centre.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A health and safety statement is developed and made available to all stakeholder groups.
2. Correct health and safety procedures are developed and documented in compliance with legislation.
3. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of procedures is established.
4. Health and safety procedures are reviewed systematically.

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## Quality Area 9: Premises

**Quality Standard:** The programme is located in an appropriate building/ accommodation.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. The building/accommodation provides a safe, clean, welcoming and comfortable learning environment.
2. Responsibility for the management of the premises is clearly allocated.
3. Systems are in place for the maintenance and repair of the building/ accommodation.
- 4.
- 5.

## Quality Area 10: Equipment

**Quality Standard:** Equipment & resources are provided in order to safely and effectively carry out all aspects of the programme.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. Staff document the equipment required to deliver the various aspects of the programme.
2. The equipment required is in place.
3. Systems are in place for regular maintenance and updating of equipment.
4. Stock records are maintained.
- 5.
- 6.

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 11: Staff Team

**Quality Standard:** Staff work as a team.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. Staff adopts a teamwork approach.
2. All members of the staff team share responsibility for the work of the centre as appropriate.
3. The role and responsibility of each staff member is outlined.
4. All staff members are provided with opportunities to contribute to the development of the centre through participation in staff meetings, training, planning and evaluation sessions as well as structured teambuilding exercises.
5. The composition of the staff team is based on the operational needs of the centre.
- 6.
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- 12.
- 13.

## Quality Area 12: Staff Recruitment & Induction

**Quality Standard:** Staff is recruited on the basis of personal suitability, appropriate experience and qualifications.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A staff recruitment policy and procedures are developed and documented.
2. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
3. The Co-Ordinator / Director is involved in the recruitment process as appropriate.

4.

5.

6.

**Quality Standard:** A staff induction programme operates in the centre.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. The induction programme is developed and documented so as to ensure that staff are aware of expectations, internal organisation, procedures and good practice.
2. All new staff are inducted in accordance with agreed induction programme.

3.

4.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE	
Quality Standard: Staff conduct is professional at all times.	
Evaluation Criteria:	
1.	A code of conduct for staff is developed based on national guidelines.
2.	All staff are informed of the code as part of their induction programme.
3.	All staff carry out their work in accordance with the code of conduct.
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## Quality Area 13: Staff Development & Training

**Quality Standard:** Staff are encouraged and supported to gain additional training/ qualifications appropriate to their role in the centre.

### Evaluation Criteria:

1. A staff development policy is developed and documented in consultation with staff and management.
2. Procedures are in place for staff to make recommendations and seek support for training and the achievement of additional qualifications as appropriate.
3. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
4. Time and resources are allocated on an annual basis for staff development.
- 5.
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EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 14: Staff Support

**Quality Standard:** A staff support system is in place.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. The staff support system has been developed in consultation with staff and local management.
2. Staff support occurs on a regular basis and in a structured format.
3. Staff feel the benefits of the staff support system.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
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- 13.
- 14.

## Quality Area 15: Social Environment

**Quality Standard:** A positive, encouraging, safe, challenging and caring environment is provided for staff and learners.

### Evaluation Criteria:

1. The centre promotes mutual respect between staff and learners.
2. The programmes delivered in the centre are interesting and challenging for learners.
3. Appropriate teacher to learner ratio applies to all programme activities.
4. The duration of the classes, learning day and annual attendance are in line with the learners' needs and abilities.
5. A child protection policy is in place and is implemented.
6. Information and training in relation to child protection is provided for relevant staff.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 16: Code of Behaviour

**Quality Standard:** Learners are encouraged to behave in an appropriate manner.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A code of behaviour is developed in conjunction with staff and learners.
2. The code outlines learners' rights and responsibilities and a grievance procedure.
3. The code outlines procedures for dealing with bullying.
4. The code outlines procedures for dealing with the misuse of drugs.
5. The code has the support of the staff and learners.
6. The code is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
7. Clear records are maintained in relation to the implementation of the code of behaviour.
- 8.
- 9.
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- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.

## Quality Area 17: Equality

**Quality Standard:** There is a commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for learners and staff in compliance with relevant equality legislation.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. An equality policy and procedures are developed and documented.
2. An equality action plan is developed and implemented as part of the Centre Development Planning Process.
3. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
4. Information and training in relation to equality is provided for staff.
5. Individuals or groups with particular needs are facilitated to participate in the programme through the provision of specific supports.
6. Codes of practice for dealing with complaints of sexual harassment, and bullying and harassment, are in place and are implemented.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 18: Interculturalism

**Quality Standard:** The programme values and reflects the cultural identity of all learners.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. Centre policies and procedures reflect an intercultural ethos and promote mutual respect, understanding and openness to individuals and groups from all cultures, ethnic, national and religious backgrounds.
2. Programmes of learning reflect and validate the cultural backgrounds and learning styles of all learners.
3. Staff are encouraged and facilitated to avail of training in the area of intercultural education in order to gain empathy and deliver intercultural learning experiences.

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## Quality Area 19: Programme Development & Delivery

**Quality Standard:** The overall centre programme meets the needs of the learners.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A policy and procedures for programme development, delivery and review are developed and documented.
2. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
3. The programme is holistic in nature and designed to meet identified learners' needs.
4. The needs of learners are identified through surveys/research as appropriate.
5. The overall programme is developed, documented and evaluated at regular intervals.
6. Flexible timetable and attendance options are available.
7. The programme reflects the local environment and cultures.
8. Structured one to one time is available for learners as appropriate to their needs.
9. Developed programmes and modes of delivery are approved by local management prior to implementation.
10. Procedures for the protection of learners, in the event of a programme ending unexpectedly, are developed and documented.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE	
<b>Quality Standard: Staff plan programmes of work for each module/ subject area on an annual basis.</b>	
<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	
1.	Programme plans prepared by staff include the content of the programme and how it is to be delivered in a given timeframe.
2.	Programmes are reviewed at regular intervals by the teachers involved, in conjunction with learners.
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
<b>Quality Standard: Programmes are delivered in a manner that meets learners' needs and in accordance with centre policy.</b>	
<b>Evaluation Criteria:</b>	
1.	Procedures for the provision/ delivery of key aspects of the programme are agreed and documented.
2.	A variety of approaches to learning is used in order to ensure that learners are actively involved and take responsibility for their own learning.
3.	Staff share and apply a common understanding of the most appropriate methodologies in the delivery of the various aspects of the programme.
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	



## Quality Area 20: Recruitment of Learners & Admission

**Quality Standard:** A local awareness raising campaign is implemented.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A range of awareness raising materials are developed and distributed to appropriate individuals and organisations within the community.
2. The awareness raising material is documented in a format appropriate to prospective learners.
- 3.
- 4.

**Quality Standard:** The referral and admissions procedures operate in a fair and consistent manner.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. An admissions policy and procedures are developed and documented.
2. Arrangements for the recognition of prior learning are developed and documented.
3. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
4. Referral systems are established with schools and other relevant agencies.
5. Learners are provided with sufficient information at entry stage to make informed choices regarding the programme.
6. Appropriate documentation and application procedures are in place.
7. Individual interviews are carried out to assess learner's overall needs and suitability for the programme.
- 8.
- 9.

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 21: Initial Assessment Induction & Review

**Quality Standard:** A welcoming and informative induction programme is provided for learners.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. An induction programme is developed and documented in consultation with staff and learners.
2. An induction booklet for learners is prepared.
3. Induction occurs with each new group of learners and individuals where necessary.
4. Learners are provided with an opportunity to evaluate the induction programme.

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<b>Quality Standard: A broad ranging initial assessment of each learner is carried out.</b>
<b>Evaluation Criteria:</b>
1. A policy and procedures for initial assessment are developed and documented.
2. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
3. An interview is carried out with each learner.
4. Interviews are carried out with relevant others, e.g. parents/ guardians, social workers, former teachers, J.L.O., probation officer as appropriate.
5. Referral for specialist assessment is organised as required.
6. Additional resources are sought where specific needs are highlighted.
7.
8.
<b>Quality Standard: An individual learning plan is developed for each learner.</b>
<b>Evaluation Criteria:</b>
1. A plan of learning is developed in conjunction with each learner, based on the outcomes of initial assessment.
2. The learning plan is implemented.
3. The learner's progress is evaluated and the learning plan is reviewed on a regular basis in co-operation with the learner.
4.
5.
6.

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 22: Learning Assessment & Certification

**Quality Standard:** Systems are in place for the provision and implementation of a range of certification options as appropriate to learners' needs.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. Learners are aware of the certification options available in the centre.
2. Responsibility for certification and assessment is clearly allocated.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

**Quality Standard:** Assessment of learner achievement operates in a fair and consistent manner across the programme.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A policy and procedures on the assessment of learner achievement are developed and documented.
2. A system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and procedures is established.
3. Assessment of learner achievement is co-ordinated across all programmes.
4. Learners have access to the information necessary for them to participate in assessment, and access to feedback on their assessment.
5. Assessment methodologies are adapted, as necessary and reasonable, to cater for learners with a disability or other persons covered by the nine grounds of the Equality legislation.

6. Assessment materials are securely stored.
7. An appeals procedure for learners is in place.
8. Procedures for internal and external verification are established.
9. A corrective action plan is in place to deal with errors, omissions and/ or deliberate acts by learners and staff which impact on the validity of the assessment process.
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EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 23: Support Structures for Learners

**Quality Standard:** A range of supports is in place for learners which help to provide a more holistic response to their needs and maximise their ability to engage in the programme.

### Evaluation Criteria:

1. Clear procedures and protocols for the provision of supports are established and implemented in relation to each of the following:
  - Counselling support
  - Guidance support
  - Childcare support
  - Transport support
2. The support is available to learners within the centre.
3. The learners use the support.
- 4.

**Quality Standard:** Arrangements are in place for regular meetings/ communication with parents/ guardians as appropriate and other relevant agencies, as a support to the learner.

### Evaluation Criteria:

1. Parents/ guardians/ relevant agencies are encouraged to support the participation of the learner in the centre.
2. Parents/ guardians are informed of the learner's progress within the centre.
- 3.
- 4.

## Quality Area 24: Literacy & Numeracy

**Quality Standard:** An integrated approach to literacy/ numeracy provision is in place.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. The literacy/ numeracy levels of learners are assessed.
2. A literacy plan for the centre is developed and implemented.
3. One to one support for literacy is available as required.
4. The induction programme for staff includes literacy awareness.
5. Literacy development is integrated into all aspects of the programme.
6. Literacy programmes are culturally and environmentally relevant.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 25: Social, Personal & Health Education

**Quality Standard:** A broad ranging and integrated programme of social, personal and health education is provided.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. The overall social, personal and health education needs of learners are assessed.
2. A programme of learning in the area of social, personal and health education is developed and delivered based on the needs of the learners.
3. Health promotion is an integrated part of centre policy and practice.
4. Learners have access to information and training on health related issues.
- 5.
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- 14.



## Quality Area 26: Work Experience

**Quality Standard:** Learners are provided with opportunities to participate in a work experience programme.

### Evaluation Criteria:

1. Procedures for establishing and supervising work experience are developed and documented.
2. Responsibility for work experience is clearly allocated.
3. Insurance requirements are met.
4. Links with employers are established.
5. Learners are adequately supervised and supported during work experience.
6. Appropriate records are maintained.
- 7.
- 8.
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- 12.
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- 15.

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area 27: Transfer & Progression

**Quality Standard:** Learners are supported to transfer and progress to programmes within or external to the centre.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. A policy and procedures for transfer and progression of learners are developed and documented.
2. Guidance/ counselling support is provided for learners during the initial stage of moving into a new programme.
3. Learners are informed of the transfer and progression options that are open to them on completion of programmes.
4. Learners' progression and transfer routes are documented.
5. Links are established between employers/ centres of further education and training or other relevant agencies in order to develop transfer and progression routes.

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## Specific Programme Evaluation

### Heading: Programme Design and Content.

#### Evaluation Criteria:

1. The design and content of the programme meet the needs of learners and will lead to the achievement of an award.
2. Learners are completing the programme and achieving awards as planned.
3. Learners are demonstrating that the requirements for the award are being met.
4. Programme plans are prepared by staff and are updated annually based on programme review by the teachers involved.
5. Learners are given opportunities to evaluate the programme delivered.

#### Programme Delivery:

1. The delivery of the programme is planned to include timetables and deadlines for programme completion and assessment.
2. The delivery methods are appropriate to the needs and abilities of the learners.
3. Learners are informed of the choices that they have to make within a programme and are supported to make the necessary choices.
4. Learners are provided with opportunities to review their own progress and take responsibility for their own learning.
5. Learners are provided with feedback from the teachers in relation to their own progress.
6. Staff development requirements for the programme are being met.

#### Assessment of Learning:

1. The administration of the assessment of learning is organised in an effective manner.
2. Assessments are carried out in a fair and consistent manner that is appropriate to learner needs and certification requirements.

<b>Assessment of Learning (continued):</b>
3. Reasonable accommodation is made for learners with a disability.
4. Assessment records and materials are stored securely.
5. Learners have access to information that allows them to participate in assessment and access to feedback on their assessment.
6. An appeals procedure for learners is in place.
<b>Associated Services and Resourcing:</b>
1. Resources are available to allow staff to deliver the programme effectively.
2. Learners have access to the materials and facilities required for successful participation in the programme.
3. Learners have access to the necessary IT resources and reference material that may be required.
4. Programme equipment is maintained.
5. Learners can avail of one to one support where necessary.
<b>Attainment of Programme Objectives:</b>
1. The objectives of the programme are clearly defined.
2. The objectives of the programme are being reached.
3. Learners complete the programme.
4. Reasons for early drop out from programmes are known and understood.
5. Learners and staff are satisfied with attainment levels.
6. The demand for and relevance of the programme are evident.

BLANK TEMPLATE

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CENTRE

## Quality Area:

**Quality Standard:****Evaluation Criteria:**

1.

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# Evaluation of Centre Development Plan

BLANK TEMPLATE

EVALUATION CRITERIA WORKSHEET - ADD EVALUATION CRITERIA AS OUTLINED IN THE CENTRE PLAN

## Action:

### Evaluation Criteria:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
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- 12.
- 13.
- 14.

## Selecting Areas for Evaluation

**To be completed by each member of staff and any other relevant stakeholder**

Please select 9 (or more) quality areas that you would wish to be included in the next annual evaluation session. Please prioritise your selection by scoring the areas selected between 1-10.

*1 = high priority 10 = of lesser priority*

Please add additional headings/ areas for evaluation if necessary.

QUALITY AREAS	Select priority areas and indicate score in this column
<b>Section One: Organisational Management</b>	
Ethos	
Planning	
Evaluation	
Communication and Links with the Community	
Transparency, Accountability and Public Relations	
Administration and Financial Management	
Record Keeping	
Health and Safety	
Premises	
Equipment	
<b>Section Two: Personnel and Development</b>	
Staff Team	
Staff Recruitment and Induction	
Staff Development and Training	
Staff Support	
<b>Section Three: Learning Environment</b>	
Social Environment	
Code of Behaviour	
Equality	
Interculturalism	
<b>Section Four: Programme</b>	
Programme Development and Delivery	
Recruitment of Learners and Admission	
Initial Assessment, Induction and Review	
Learning Assessment and Certification	
Support Structures for Learners	
Literacy and Numeracy	
Social, Personal and Health Education	
Work Experience	
Transfer and Progression	

## Procedures for Youthreach/Senior Travellers Centres

Issued by: Vocational Support Services Unit January 2004

1. (1) A clear 'user friendly' application form should be developed. **Application**
  - (2) This should be completed in respect of each applicant and should be certified by the applicant.
  - (3) Certification may require the use of an 'X' or some other appropriate symbol. Such cases should be witnessed and signed accordingly.
  - (4) The application form should provide for:
    - Name
    - Address
    - Date of Birth
    - Reason for wishing to attend centre
    - Background information such as Education, Work History and details of attendances at other centres
    - PPS Number
    - Other relevant information
  - (5) Application forms shall be date stamped on receipt.
  
2. (1) Original birth certs should be requested. These should be checked to application form, copied (copy certified that original has been inspected) and original cert returned to the applicant. **Assessment**
  - (2) Education, work and training records should be independently checked.
  - (3) Arrangements should be agreed with the local Social Welfare Office for checking eligibility and avoiding duplication of payment. (This could include a requirement that the Social Welfare Officer stamp the application form as evidence of eligibility or requesting the applicant to obtain a letter of eligibility from their Social Welfare Office).
  - (4) Social Welfare Offices should be notified of commencement and finishing dates or other appropriate arrangement agreed.
  - (5) Assessment should ideally be carried out by two staff and application forms initialled accordingly. If appropriate, an interview should be conducted. If it is not practical to involve two staff in the assessment process approvals/files should be forwarded to Head Office with the initial set up for independent review in Head Office.
  - (6) Trainees should be informed of the acceptance or rejection of their application. Reason for rejection should be given.
  - (7) An agreed programme of training should be developed for each trainee.
  - (8) Individual files should be maintained for each applicant to contain all personal and essential information. 'Check off' lists should be developed to ensure all necessary information is received.



3. (1) Trainees should 'clock in' and 'clock out'. If a clock card system is not in place a signing in and out register should be maintained. **Attendances**
- (2) Clock cards should be pre-numbered and a control record maintained in respect of cards ordered, received, issued and in stock.
- (3) The clock or register should be located in a secure place. Clocking or signing in/out should be capable of being witnessed.
- (4) A class register/record should be independently maintained & signed by each teacher/tutor to record the attendance of trainees in class.
- (5) The clock/register should be reconciled each week to the class register and explanations obtained for differences.
- (6) A general Code of Conduct should be developed and approved by the Board of Management. National organisations should be consulted in this respect.
- (7) A guideline should be developed as to what constitutes an authorised absence including when sick certificates are required in respect of sick leave absences. Details should be incorporated into the Code of Conduct.
- (8) The guidelines should provide a framework for termination of training where there is evidence of abuse of absence policy.
4. (1) The Director/Co-ordinator shall ensure trainees are set up to receive correct payments. **Payment**
- (2) Payment returns should be processed based on reconciled clock/register and class attendance records.
- (3) Returns should be processed independent of the Director but certified by the Director.
- (4) A set up form/copy of application form should be forwarded to head office for each new set up. Files should be checked by Head Office staff to verify underlying records. This can be done at set up or by independent checking of records at the centre at regular intervals.
- (5) Control totals should be developed to verify output totals to input totals.
- (6) Payment records should differentiate between attendances and authorised absences.
- (7) Deduction mandates should be signed to facilitate deductions for meals/travel. Care should be taken to ensure meals/travel allowances are not paid in respect of approved absences.
- (8) Where payment is made by paying order, students should sign as evidence of receipt of payment. Signed sheets should be returned to Head Office.
5. (1) Each 6 months a report should be submitted to the Board of Management, to include inter alia: **Monitoring /Review**
1. Period each trainee is in the centre
  2. Compliance or otherwise with attendance policy
  3. Achievements/progress of each student
- (2) Clarity should be provided by the Board of Management as to the length of time trainees should attend the centre.

- (3) The Adult Education Organiser or other Approved Officer shall carry out spot checks on a monthly basis to ensure attendance records, supporting documentation and payment returns are in order.
- (4) The Director/Co-ordinator should be provided with an approved budget and arrangements agreed for the preparation and review of expenditure reports on a monthly basis.
- (5) The Director should submit a financial report to Board of Management outlining

**Annual    YTD**

a) *Approved Tuition Hours*

*Teachers/Tutors*  
*Director*

*Hours Utilised*

*Teachers/Tutors*  
*Director*

*Balance Available*

*Teacher/Tutor*  
*Director*

b) *Non Pay Budget*

*Non Pay Expenditure*  
*Balance available*

c) *Allowances - Amount Received*

*Allowances - Amount Spent*  
*Balance available*

- (6) A copy of this report shall be forwarded to the AEO or other approved officer on a monthly basis.
- (7) All returns shall be made to the Department within approved deadlines. As part of this process, head office and centre records should be reconciled.

- 6. (1) Trainees on work experience should be covered by the VECs insurance.
- (2) Employers facilitating work experience should sign an attendance record and if possible an evaluation form.
- (3) Trainees should be required to prepare a report for each week of work experience. This should be checked and signed by the Director/Co-ordinator and maintained on the trainees file.

**Work  
Experience**

- 7. (1) Staff should be recruited in accordance with the normal procedure of the VEC and contracts issued accordingly.
- (2) Timetables should be developed in accordance with criteria prescribed by the Department.
- (3) Timetables should be approved by the CEO and Board of Management.
- (4) Payment returns should be reconciled by Head Office to approved timetables.

**Staff**

- (5) Returns should be processed monthly and controls implemented to avoid duplicate claims.
- (6) Files should be maintained in head office and include application form, letter of offer/acceptance, terms/contract of employment, details of qualifications, agreed contracted hours and any amendments.

8. (1) Supplies shall be ordered in accordance with the approved purchasing procedures of the VEC.

**Creditors**

- (2) A goods received book (GRB) shall be maintained in respect of all supplies. This may be maintained in each class or at reception. It shall be signed by the teacher/tutor responsible for receiving the goods/services.
- (3) Invoices shall be reconciled with the GRB & order. Calculations shall be checked and a voucher certified by the Director and forwarded for processing in the approved manner.
- (4) Original invoices duly authorised by the teacher/tutor shall accompany all payments.
- (5) Every effort should be made to have separation between ordering, receipt and payment of goods / services.

9. (1) Details of all equipment etc shall be entered in stock books/asset records under the supervision of the Director.

**Assets**

- (2) The stock book shall show details of acquisitions, transfers, breakages and disposals.
- (3) Old/obsolete equipment should be identified each year and a report submitted to the CEO seeking approval for appropriate disposal.
- (4) The Board of Management should approve guidelines regarding goods/materials of value produced as part of the training process.
- (5) A register shall be maintained to show where title or other appropriate records are maintained in support of the ownership/rent/lease of the building.
- (6) A safety statement shall be maintained in accordance with health & safety legislation.

10. (1) An official receipt shall be issued in respect of all monies received. Receipts shall be lodged daily to the VECs account in accordance with approved procedures.

**Receipts  
(if appropriate)**

- (2) If appropriate, a safe should be available to provide safekeeping of money or to other valuables.
- (3) Receipts should be credited to the budget of the centre.

11. (1) Application forms, relevant correspondence and premises should highlight sponsors of schemes eg. EU, NDP, Department of Education & Science etc.

**Promotion**

12. (1) These or other appropriate procedures should be approved by the Board of Management and brought the attention of all relevant staff.

**General**

- (2) The Chief Executive Officer shall be required to approve issues of an exceptional nature or where deviation from procedure maybe required.

13. (1) Each member of staff discovering or suspecting any of the following:

**Misappropriation  
etc.**

- Any incident of actual or suspected fraud, theft or other misappropriation.
- Overpayment or underpayment.
- Irregular or unfounded payment.

shall forthwith inform his/her head of department who shall immediately notify the Chief Executive Officer of the circumstances. If appropriate the Chief Executive Officer should be notified directly.

A full report on the occurrence shall be prepared and submitted to the Chief Executive Officer showing:

- Amount involved.
- Reasons for occurrence.
- Persons involved.
- Action taken in the relevant case.
- Action taken to prevent re-occurrence.

Where appropriate the VECs insurers shall be notified in accordance with the terms of the Fidelity Guarantee/Administrative Negligence Policies. Issues regarding theft or fraud should be referred to the Garda Síochána.

**Accountability:**

Obligation to account for one's actions or willingness to accept responsibility.

**Admission:**

The process of admitting a learner into the programme.

**Assessment:**

An exercise such as a written test, portfolio, or experiment that seeks to measure a learner's skills, knowledge or competencies.

**Centre Development Planning (Strategic Planning):**

The process of reviewing the centre's purpose and activities with a view to setting out a clear direction and concrete goals for the future.

**Certification:**

A formal written statement of standards achieved by an individual as part of an education or training programme.

**Completion Rates:**

The number of learners who complete a programme of education and training expressed as a percentage of the number of learners who commenced the programme concerned.

**Ethos:**

The fundamentals and distinctive character of a centre reflecting beliefs and principles that guide the work.

**Evaluation:**

The process of examining centre's practice with regard to the Quality Standards, acknowledging success and identifying areas and specific actions for improvement.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Statements of how Quality Standards are made operational.

**Individual Learning Plan:**

A plan of learning tailored to the learner's specific needs and abilities, written by staff in conjunction with the learner, which sets out broad goals for the learner to reach.

**Induction:**

Formal information and training provided to a learner or member of staff during their initial period in the centre.

**Initial Assessment:**

A process undertaken with new learners that will determine their ability, interests and needs for the purpose of developing and implementing an individual learning plan. The process may involve collecting information from other individuals or organisations in order to create a more complete picture of the learner's situation.

**Interculturalism:**

A principle that underpins educational policy and requires that educational policy and practice be framed in the context of serving a diverse population as opposed to a uniform one.

**Learning Environment:**

All of the physical surroundings, psychological or emotional conditions and social or cultural influences affecting the growth and development of a learner.

**Mission Statement:**

This sets out the fundamental purpose of an organisation and what it hopes to achieve.

**Monitoring:**

A process of tracking and recording the implementation of Quality Standards, policies, procedures and centre plans.

**Personnel:**

The body of persons employed by the organisation. May include Director/ Co-Ordinator, teachers and other centre staff.

**Progression:**

The process by which learners transfer from the centre to another programme of education and training, employment or any other relevant option.

**Quality Assurance:**

The system(s) put in place to establish, maintain and improve the quality of all the key aspects of the work in centres.

**Quality Standards:**

Statements outlining the key elements of a quality programme.

**Referral:**

To direct towards a source of help, information or service.

**Social Environment:**

Social and cultural patterns and processes that influence the environment in the centre.

**Staff Support:**

A structured system of providing opportunities for staff to discuss problems relating to their work on an individual or group basis leading to problem solving and issue resolution.

**Stakeholder:**

Individuals or organisations that have a key interest in, and a responsibility for the success of the centre.

**Transparency:**

The quality of being clear and easy to understand.

**Vocational Education Committee (VEC):**

Regional management body responsible for YOUTHREACH and Senior Traveller Training Centres.

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