The matrix Standard – 2015
Guidance for Welfare to Work & Work Based Learning Providers

ASSESSMENT SERVICES

matrix ™
quality standard for information
advice and guidance services

ELEMENT 1 - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
This element is about the way in which the organisation is led and managed to develop an effective service

Criteria	What this might mean	What this might mean in practice
1.1 The service has clearly defined measurable aims and objectives which link to any wider organisational strategic aims	Management and staff are able to describe and give examples of measurable aims and objectives of the service and how they link to the wider organisational strategic aims. Managers and staff can describe how they are involved in developing the aims and objectives of the service.	Your Assessor will want to speak to a senior person within your organisation to confirm the overall strategic aims and how the IAG service fits with these. Useful documents may include organisations' mission and values, the SAR, Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Business Improvement Plan (BIP) and your IAG strategy or policy. This criteria links closely to 3.2 and 4.1. Milestones or targets for the IAG service need to be clear. For example, the organisations aim in the self-assessment report (SAR) might be to increase job outcomes and/or qualification rates. You need to be clear about the contribution the IAG service makes to the achievement of your service aims. This might be a measurable IAG service objective to increase the number of job outcomes for adults to 20%, or a further measurable IAG objective might be to increase the number of lone parents into work from 15% to 20%. As a training provider you may have identified that you wish to be above the national average for retention, achievement and success or you may have specific percentages that you wish to meet. You will need to be clear how the IAG that you deliver supports the achievement of these measures.
1.2 The service is provided with clear leadership and direction	Managers can describe how they lead and direct people in the delivery of the service. Staff can describe how well managers lead them to deliver the service.	Your senior management team has effectively communicated what the organisation is striving to achieve and how this relates to the service/s being delivered. Staff can clearly describe the organisation's overall ambition and how the IAG service fits into these objectives. This might be tutors, assessors and advisors understanding their role in the delivery of IAG, and how this supports learners or clients into sustainable employment and how that supports the organisation's overall aims.

1.3 The organisation implements policies to promote equality and diversity, impartiality, confidentiality and professional integrity in all aspects of service delivery	Managers and staff can describe and give examples of how the systems and processes in place promote equality, diversity, impartiality, confidentiality and professional integrity.	The implementation of equality and diversity could be demonstrated by providing materials in a range of formats, or by using monitoring data to target specific groups. For example, you may have found through monitoring that there is an attainment gap between different types of learners or clients and so you implement new approaches to address this. You could give examples of how you refer individuals to other help and support that the service can't directly provide to demonstrate impartiality through signposting. Confidentiality can be demonstrated by staff explaining how they cover it during initial or entry IAG, and that learners/clients know they can discuss anything with staff in the knowledge that it will be kept confidential unless there is a safeguarding risk. This could be described in materials for learners or clients, records stored in locked cabinets or by individuals confirming their understanding of how the service is confidential. You can also describe how you uphold any professional codes of practice in your work with learners or clients. Staff may be able to provide examples to the Assessor where they have implemented policies in practice.
1.4 The organisation complies with existing and new legislation which might impact upon the service	Managers and staff can describe and give examples of legislation including how it impacts on the service.	Appropriate legislation is likely to vary depending upon the nature of the service/s being delivered and the organisation. However, it is likely to include areas such as health and safety, equal opportunities, data protection and safeguarding legislation as a minimum. It is important that all staff, including volunteers, can provide examples of appropriate legislation and how they are updated with any changes. For example, staff should be able to describe how the organisation has ensured rigorous safeguarding, and how health and safety legislation is an integral part of day-to-day activities, this may also include lone working.
1.5 The organisation defines client outcomes and uses them as a measure of success for the service	Examples of definitions of client outcomes are provided. Managers can describe how they are set and who is involved. They can describe how they are reviewed.	You can describe how as part of your planning process you have identified the impacts/outcomes you expect your IAG service to achieve for your learners or clients. These could include • Increased awareness and understanding of progression routes to employment or further learning • Awareness of a range of volunteering, work placement or paid employment opportunities • Informed decision making about the right course/action

		• Improve employability skills through the development of a CV etc • Improved confidence and motivation to achieve goals • Barriers to progression are addressed • Learners and clients make progress
1.6 The organisation promotes the service in ways which are accessible to all those eligible to use it	Managers and staff can explain different methods of how the service is promoted - what works well and why in relation to the eligible client group.	Consider how your IAG service is promoted including how different methods of marketing and promotion have been used. Does this ensure that the information about the IAG available is accessible to all eligible potential learners and clients? You should be able to describe which promotional activity works best and why in relation to the different learner or client group/s. Examples could include your website, leaflets, Virtual Learning Environments (VLE), E- Portfolio, brochures or prospectuses, via one to one IAG sessions, group workshops, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, attendance at Jobs Fairs, information days or careers evenings. If referral from another organisation is a key feature, consider how you keep them up to date with your current IAG service offer. Depending on the method of promotion, this criterion may link to criteria 4.7.
1.7 Clients and staff influence the design and development of the service	Service design and delivery reflects the views and experiences of staff and clients. Staff and clients are able to describe how they are involved in the design and development of the service and give examples of how they have influenced both.	This is about the opportunities you provide for learners, clients and staff to influence the service. For example, you may have a learner voice strategy which outlines the different ways in which learners are involved in developing the service, and your staff may input their ideas at staff / team meetings. You will need to give examples to demonstrate changes as a result of this involvement and show how this feedback has helped shape the current service.
1.8 The organisation establishes effective links with other appropriate partnerships and networks to enhance the service	Managers and staff are able to describe how they establish links with other partnerships and networks and measure the effectiveness of the relationship. Representatives from partnerships and networks are able to give examples of how well their relationship is working with the service.	You can describe the partnerships and networks you are involved with and how these benefit your IAG service. These could be organisations with whom you have a contractual relationship, employers who offer work placements or those that you network with in order to provide wider support to your learners or clients. This could also include involvement or membership with consortiums to access other providers to share information. This could contribute to developing your practice or service Particularly for larger organisations, this can also include internal partnerships and networks formed to support / enhance the service. This criterion links closely to criterion 4.4 so you will need to describe how you evaluate the effectiveness of the relationships.

ELEMENT 2 - Resources
This element describes the assets invested and applied in providing an effective service

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
2.1 The organisation uses its resources effectively to deliver the service	Managers and staff are able to explain what resources – including human, physical and financial are needed to deliver the service/s. Managers and staff are able to explain how the level of resource, in relation to client needs, are established and can give examples of how effectively resources are used.	You need to demonstrate how when planning service delivery, you ensure there are sufficient resources to deliver the IAG service effectively. For example, when you may want to consider how staff are supported with appropriate equipment to ensure they can operate as effectively as possible or how you use a flexible workforce in order to address peaks in delivery. Do you buy in any specialist resources such as subject expertise?
2.2 Clients are provided with current, accurate and quality assured information which is inclusive	Clients and staff are able to describe and give examples of the types of information they were able to access and explain how appropriate it was to their needs. Managers and staff are able to describe what quality assurance systems are in place to ensure information is current, accurate and is written in plain language, free from bias and takes account of diversity. Managers and staff delivering the service are able to explain how they support clients and how the resources they use are quality assured	You need to describe the information resources you use, (both paper based and electronic) for example, current labour market information, occupational job profiles and training and provider prospectuses, careers and job search websites, leaflets from local agencies and also the systems used to maintain them. For training providers, this may also include the qualification standards to enable learners to understand the nature of the programme and to be able to make choices in optional units appropriate to their interests and job role. You could review resources as part of team meetings or a staff member could have responsibility for reviewing new and existing resources periodically. You could also be using only reputable websites that you know are quality assured. You may have an approved, and quality assured directory of IAG resources, administered by the service and quality assured by managers. Further information may include for example advanced learning loans, careers guidance and information reflecting the geographical spread of delivery and the learner's location. Information may also refer to matters relating to employment advice and more personal aspects such as housing, benefits and health.

2.3 The organisation defines the skills, knowledge, competencies and qualifications, in line with current national recognised professional qualifications and frameworks, for individual staff roles, linked to the aims and objectives of the service	Managers can describe and give examples of how they identify and define the skills, knowledge and competencies of staff roles linked to achieving the aims and objectives of the service/s including being aware of the boundaries of their role. Managers and staff can describe the qualifications and frameworks which are appropriate to their role in delivering the aims and objectives of the service/s. For careers guidance staff in England this should include professional standards and qualifications determined by the Career Development Institute or other representative bodies.	You need to describe the skills, knowledge, competencies or qualifications needed for each job role. These do not have to be IAG qualifications; for example, Customer Service qualifications for reception staff who deal with enquiries. Careers Advisers delivering the National Careers Service will be expected to have or be working towards appropriate CDI qualifications. Your tutors and assessors may have qualifications that include 'support to learners' as an integral part of them, such as those offered by the Institute of Employability Professionals. Also these staff may have occupational competency in their subject area and able to provide up to date information on working in a particular sector.
2.4 Staff are supported in undertaking continuous professional development and provided with opportunities for career progression	Managers and staff can explain and give examples of how they are supported in continually developing their skills, knowledge and competence including any appropriate qualifications for their role. Managers and staff are able to describe how they are involved in the process of identifying their needs and appropriate learning and development activities, including career progression opportunities.	Examples here could include short courses (such as motivational interviewing techniques or using career aptitude tests with learners or clients, engaging with employers, understanding the local job market), shadowing, development activities during team meetings, informal training, reading, contribution to professional journals, sharing best practice, safeguarding, attending conferences, peer observation of service delivery as well as formal qualifications such as those in Employability and Information and Advice.
2.5 Effective induction processes are in place for all staff	Managers are able to describe the induction process for all roles including staff employed by the organisation and any volunteers. Newly recruited staff and those who have recently changed roles can describe the induction process and how this has helped them perform effectively.	Any member of staff or volunteer who has recently joined your service should be able to outline the effectiveness of their induction. They will need to be able to discuss how the knowledge and skills required to do the job were made available to them and whether they had been introduced to the organisation in an effective way. Also, anyone changing role within the organisation's IAG service or who has returned from long term absence will be able to confirm that they have been given the support and development necessary to enable them to understand their role and carry it out.

ELEMENT 3 - Service Delivery
This element describes the way in which the service is delivered effectively

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
3.1 The service is defined so that clients are clear about what they might expect	Managers and staff are able to define the service/s offering, in relation to their client group including prospective / potential clients and give examples how they ensure clients understand the service/s offering. Clients can describe and give examples of how they know what to expect from the service/s.	Your staff can provide examples of how they ensure learners and clients understand possible outcomes that can be achieved by the IAG service delivered. Learners and clients can describe and give examples of how they know what to expect from the service as explained to them at the beginning of their journey. For example, learners and clients are aware of the support available to them, such as, one to one meetings, and understand how it would help them in making decisions about their next steps. This criterion is linked closely to criteria 1.5 and 4.2.
3.2 The service is delivered effectively to meet its aims and objectives	Managers and staff can describe and give examples of the service/s delivery in place which supports the delivery of the aims and objectives.	Staff can describe how the IAG service that has been provided was delivered in ways that meet the aims and objectives as described in criterion 1.1. Some illustrative examples might be that IAG delivery is undertaken to support the achievement of the IAG service objectives through: • Access to sector based academies through partnerships with employers and access to voluntary placements • Access to a Jobs Club for learners or clients to apply for jobs, experience interview techniques, develop a CV and covering letter • Guest speakers from various occupational sectors attend workshops or careers evenings to discuss working in their industry to explore careers options and choices, including career development and progression. • Discussions between learner and assessor about the relevance of different optional units that link with their job role and future progression • Review discussions to enable effective progress towards goals This criterion is linked closely with criteria 1.1 and 4.1.

3.3 The service provided is impartial and objective	Managers and staff are able to describe how they ensure the service/s is impartial, free from bias and objective. Clients can describe how they are made aware of any potential conflicts of interest in the advice provided and understand the limitations of the service/s.	Consider how you would explain to an Assessor that the service delivery is centred on the individual and their needs and goals and how your IAG service is free from bias. You may wish to show examples of learner and client outcomes and destination data to emphasise the breadth of progression pathways and or impartiality. Work Programme advisors may use partnerships with training providers to evidence impartiality reflective of the client's needs. Training providers may evidence this through access to consortiums to identify other providers who for example, deliver sector based training or advice and guidance within a particular vocational area or industry, based on the individual learner or client's needs.
3.4 Clients are given appropriate options to explore and understand that they are responsible for making their own decisions	Clients are able to describe and give examples of how they have benefited from support process and how they were able to explore different options that met their expectations. Clients are able to describe what support they were given to understand and make appropriate choices. Clients are able to describe how they came to their decisions	Staff delivering your IAG service should be able to describe how they check that learners and clients have understood the options open to them and the consequences of alternative courses of action. Learners and clients should also be able to describe their experience and how they made up their mind without any pressure. Learners or clients may have access to the Individual Learning Plan or learning agreement. For Work Programme, this may be an action plan with agreed targets.
3.5 When exploring options, clients are provided with and supported to use appropriate resources including access to technology	Clients are able to describe and give examples of what resources were made available when exploring different and appropriate options.	Staff, learners and clients can give examples of the resources used, for example, researching useful websites for information such as the National Careers Service, National Apprenticeship Service, job search and college or university websites, or using software packages or the Universal Job Match Service or similar to help individuals make choices. Other examples are listed in criterion 4.7 and could include Apps for smart phones and hardcopy resources such as prospectuses and job vacancies.
3.6 Clients benefit from signposting and referral to other appropriate agencies or organisations	Clients are able to describe the benefits they received by being referred to other appropriate agencies or organisations. Representatives from partnerships and networks are able to explain what benefits and services clients referred to them have received.	Staff should describe examples of when they have referred learners and clients and how they know that individuals have benefited from this. Learners, clients and partners can also describe how effective such referrals have been.

ELEMENT 4 - Continuous Quality Improvement
This element describes the way in which the service provided is reviewed and performance improves as a result.

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
4.1 The organisation measures and evaluates the service against its stated aims and objectives and identifies improvements	Managers and staff are able to explain and give measurable examples of the extent to which the aims and objectives have been met. Managers and staff can describe how all aspects of the service/s are reviewed against the measurable aims and objectives including promotion/engagement, service delivery, resources, leadership/management.	There are strong linkages between this criterion, 1.1 and 3.2. Linked together, the criteria help to demonstrate the 'plan, do, review' cycle. You need to provide information on the measurement of the aims and objectives you set in criterion 1.1 and, knowing the results, what improvements you have put in place. The emphasis here is on knowing what you have achieved against the objectives you set and implementing changes as a result. You may have this information in Management Information statistics, reports to Funders, etc. Your staff should be able to explain how monitoring and evaluation have identified improvements and informed the future planning and review processes. So linking to the examples suggested in 1.1, your service might determine that the IAG service contributes to supporting people into employment through attending a programme to develop employability skills, However, through analysis it has been identified that there are high numbers of learners or clients with significant barriers to progression such as; low levels of confidence, low levels of literacy and ICT and some of the more personal aspects such as substance and alcohol misuse and therefore you seek and develop partnerships with other support organisation in order to address these barriers to progression.
4.2 The organisation monitors and evaluates client outcomes to support and improve service delivery	Managers, staff and where appropriate clients are able to describe and give examples of how client outcomes are used to improve the service.	There are strong linkages between this criterion, 1.5 and 3.1. The linkage of the criteria helps to demonstrate the learner or client's journey and the outcomes realised. You need to provide information on how your learners or clients have achieved the outcomes you defined in criterion 1.5 and what improvements you have implemented, as a result. You may have this information as survey results, through using distance travelled tools or other monitoring processes. The emphasis is on what improvements you have implemented as a result of knowing the outcomes of your learners or clients. For example:

		• Those seeking employment have a clear planned destination and are able to confirm the employability skills they have gained such as; developing a CV and covering letter, experienced taster sessions used to establish and inform destination goals, access to work experience or volunteering opportunities.
		• Clear links to softer outcomes such as low levels of confidence noted as a barrier to progression and how these are used to show learners and clients the progress and their distance travelled.
		• Learners and clients are aware of their SMART targets, the review process and can see their progress as a result of the IAG service
4.3 The organisation evaluates feedback on the service to build upon its strengths and addresses any areas for improvement	Managers and staff are able to explain how all forms of feedback and evaluation information are used to establish areas of strength and areas for improvement. Clients are aware of who to contact with a compliment, comment or complaint and the process the organisation will follow in dealing with them. Managers and staff are able to explain how complaints are recorded, investigated and what action is taken.	There are strong linkages between criterion, 1.1, 1.5 and 1.7. You will need to describe how you collect feedback and give examples of how it has been used to improve the IAG service aspects of your service delivery. Learners, clients and staff can also help by describing things that have changed as a result of their feedback.
4.4 The organisation evaluates the effectiveness of its partnerships and networks to improve the service	Clients, staff and other stakeholders are able to describe the evaluation process and give examples of how the information is used to improve the service. Examples should show measurable outcomes and link to improvements.	This links to criterion 1.8. You will need to describe how you review the effectiveness of your partnership working; how you know that the relationships benefit both parties and your learners or clients. You will also need to share any changes you have made as a result of this evaluation. Informal evaluation could be through weekly updates and general communications. Formal evaluation could include contract meetings and performance reviews. A survey could be sent using formal evaluation forms or by using on-line surveys asking partners for feedback on the effectiveness of the relationship and the impact it is having on the IAG service you provide.
4.5 The organisation defines quality assurance approaches which are used to improve the service	Managers and staff are able to describe how the service is quality assured and what plans, policies, procedures and/or processes are in place and how they are implemented.	You will need to describe the systems you have in place to monitor the quality of IAG service delivery and how these processes help you to improve your information, advice or guidance. For example observations of staff delivering IAG, feedback methodologies etc. A Quality Calendar may be used to trigger evaluation and monitoring to cover all aspects of delivery, for example audit of action plans/ILPs for SMART targets and evidence of progression.

4.6 Staff performance, linked to their role within the aims and objectives of the service, is reviewed and evaluated to improve the service	Managers and staff can describe the process for evaluating performance in relation to roles, aims and objectives of the service. Managers are able to give measurable examples of how effective staff performance has been in relation to service aims and objectives.	Staff will need to describe the process used for performance review such as an appraisal, and give examples of the objectives they agreed as a result. They will also need to explain how these link to the IAG service aims and objectives
4.7 Effective use is made of technology to improve the service	Clients, managers and staff are able to describe and give examples of how technology has enhanced the way they deliver the service.	Staff should describe the technology used to support service delivery and give examples of how things have improved as a result. For example; • The use of I-Pads or lap tops to facilitate outreach work, and to offer an inclusive service to those without access to technology • The use of smart phone technology using Q codes to promote the different aspects of the IAG delivered • Tracking databases to ensure learners are making progress • Skype could be used to provide an inclusive service and extend IAG opportunities for those who are unable to attend in person • The website and social media such as; Face Book and Twitter, could be used to communicate with learners who prefer using technology. These platforms could be further used to share news and events, to support service marketing campaigns, advertise options and choices to learners, share partnership offers, advertise employment / volunteering opportunities, publish success stories and case studies to share with its current and intended client group • The website and social media can be used to inform learners how their feedback is used to improve the service. As an example, 'You said we did' may be used • On-line careers sections on the website. This could include a careers MOT section that outlines the service offer and details the options and choices and the types of careers they could lead to. This could include a pre-employment initial assessment to support individuals to make informed choices
4.8 The organisation continually reviews improvements to help inform the future aims and objectives of the service	Managers and staff are able to provide examples of actions which have been taken to improve the service on an on-going basis.	This criterion is the overarching review cycle that relates to all aspects of the Standard. You will need to describe how your processes enable you to 'plan, do and review' in order to improve your IAG service to learners or clients. You will need to describe examples of how such reviews have influenced planning and led to further changes.

The matrix 6 Box – Training Provider Example

Plan	Do	Review
Criteria 1.1 **Organisation aim:** To help businesses to grow and prosper by jointly investing with employers in developing the skills and competencies of the workforce, business and local communities. **Service objective:** To engage effectively with young people aged 14-19 and support planned growth in Apprenticeship participation, measured by • An increase in framework success rates to 84% for Advanced Apprenticeships and 78% for Intermediate Apprenticeships. • Improvement in timely success rates to 70% across all occupational areas. • An increase in the number of young people progressing to level 3 qualifications to 40% • Reduction in Learner turnover from 13% to 10% in 2013/14	**Criteria 3.2** The Recruitment team are effective in engaging with local employers to secure Apprenticeship vacancies and work experience placements. The strategy of attending all local schools and College events to provide information and advice on the range of opportunities is also effective in engaging with young people. The strategy of carrying out an assessment of personal development which covers areas such as housing, finances, and health issues as part of the initial assessment process at the start of a programme is an effective tool for identifying potential barriers and enables staff to put in place the most appropriate support. Frequent visits to the workplace in addition to formal reviews, ensure that learners receive comprehensive support and achieve their learning goals within the agreed timescales.	**Criteria 4.1** All vocational areas are currently exceeding the national averages for overall success rates and all but one area exceeding the national average for timely success rates. The number of all learners who leave the programme within six weeks is currently standing at 7% against the target of 10%. Monitoring the conversion rate for Apprenticeship applicants and feedback from employers identified that those who were unsuccessful did not perform well at the interview. The Recruitment Team have now prepared a leaflet with tips and typical interview questions and offer additional mock interview sessions. Monitoring of learners' progress highlighted a number of areas in which progress was slower than required; in response, more staff have been recruited which allowed caseloads for assessors to be reduced so that staff can make more frequent visits to the workplace and offer additional support.
Criteria 1.5 **Individual outcomes**: The individuals intended outcomes for learners are developed during the initial engagement and contact with learners, these include: • Learners are making progress towards their goals • Learners develop skills for the workplace e.g. communication, self confidence, punctuality etc. • In addition to qualification goals, learners establish personal goals	**Criteria 3.1** Learners reported that they had been made aware of what to expect in relation to the content and structure of the programme at their induction. They also understood the support they would receive from their assessor with regular visits to their workplace and knew how this would help them to develop a range of skills and self-confidence.	**Criteria 4.2** Learners complete a short questionnaire at the start of their programme as part of the Individual Learning Plan. This is completed again midway and at the end of the programme. Results are collated and presented for each centre and as a company-wide analysis. Review of analyses highlighted that there have been significant increases in the levels. Some areas, however, had learners who did not show significant distance travelled in key qualities such as team working and managing time. The company has therefore decided that in future all vocational areas will now include 'World of Work' session at the start of the programme and aspects discussed by assessors on an ongoing basis.