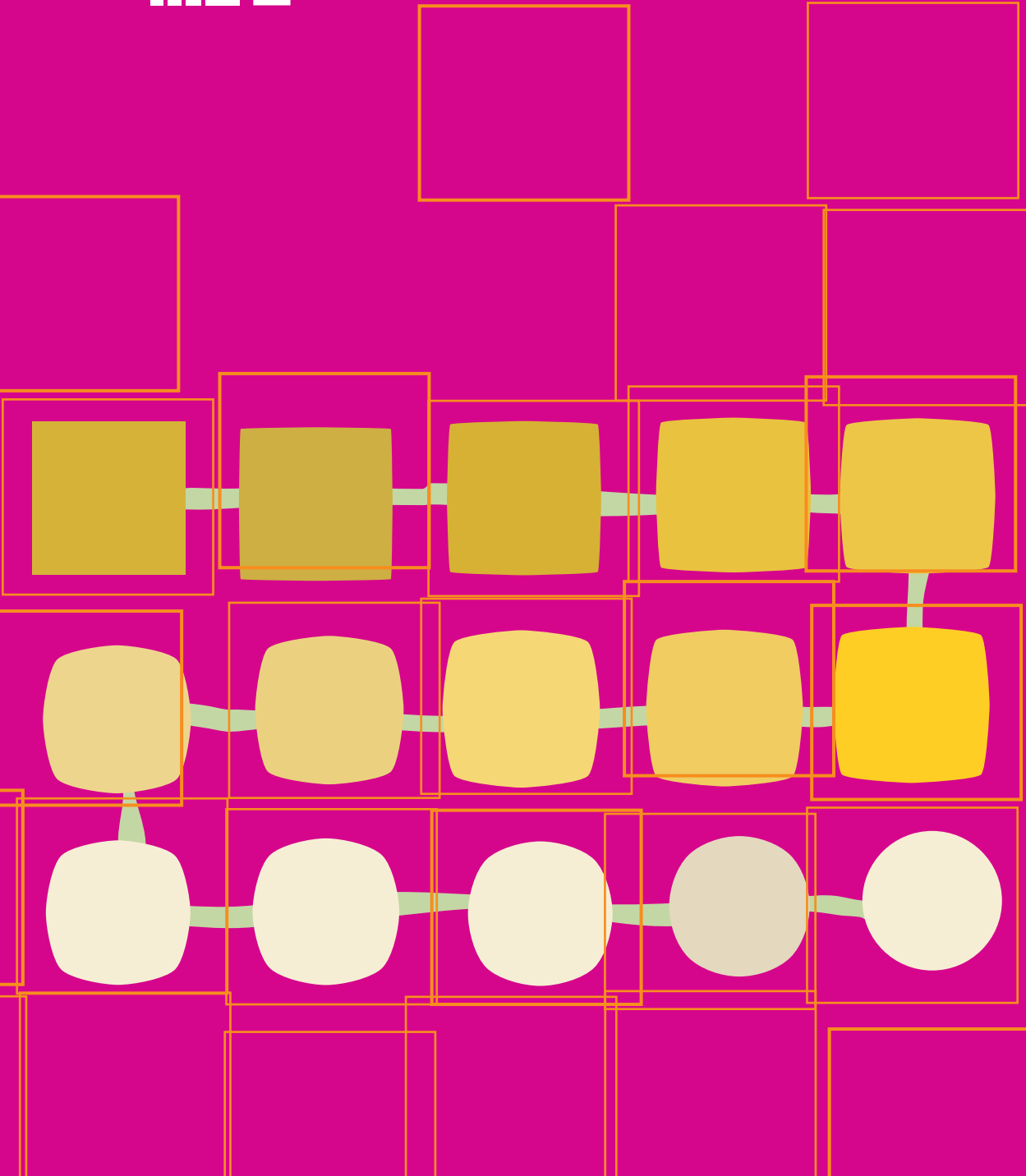




Planning and managing curriculum change





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Contents

Acknowledgements	
Introduction	1
Planning the curriculum: 14–19	3
Approaches to planning the 14–19 curriculum: case studies	9
Curriculum design and development	23
Successful change management strategies	28
References and further reading	42
Appendix 1 Good practice checklists for transition arrangements	47
Appendix 2 New measures of success – RARPA	57

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This publication is designed to support middle and senior managers in planning and managing curriculum change.

There is no doubt that the curriculum needs to evolve and change with the purpose of meeting the changing demands of life and work in the 21st century. The nature of the labour market has changed dramatically and therefore it follows that curriculum change is inevitable. The whole economy has moved from manufacturing to a knowledge-based and service-based economy. Great Britain has moved from the notion of 'job for life' to 'job for the life of the project'. We need to ask ourselves before embarking on curriculum change how we prepare learners for that changing market place. We are not preparing learners for a job for life. It is clear that we need to prepare learners with the skills, knowledge and personal qualities to be adaptable and flexible so that whatever the job becomes they can actually learn those new skills and acquire what's required to move forward as the work changes.

Gareth Mills, Head of Programme, Futures, Innovation and E-learning at the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), states: 'Psychologists have brought us new evidence based research that tells us things like emotional intelligence are really important. Your view of your own intellect, whether it's fixed or malleable, can shape your life. Often emotional intelligence is called EQ. This is something from the employers. A high IQ might get you hired because you've got the right qualifications but a low EQ will certainly get you fired' (Mills nd). For this reason alone, teachers' professional training should include the study of neuro-science, cognitive psychology, emotional intelligence and creativity as well as detailed study of teaching and learning styles and thinking skills.

The change process is an intricate one – human aspects of educational innovation are complex even if the initiative itself is simple. We are often told that innovation is something simply to be planned, delivered and evaluated. In simplistic terms that is what we do when we introduce a new qualification. However, when you introduce people into the equation complexities arise. It is not surprising, then, that the top-down approach to introducing change tends to fail or be subverted. The lesson that must be learned from experience is that although educational leadership implies a measure of 'top downness', this has to be supported by a strong commitment from the 'bottom up' if an innovation is to succeed. Managers must not forget that it is people who make things happen, not the system or procedure they are required to implement to promote a particular change.

Research also tells us that persuading the 'committed hearts and minds' to support the implementation of change is crucial. Too big a leap, and fertile ground is created for scepticism – even cynicism – to flourish. More might be gained by proposing less, and

2

suggesting that it is carried out in small, manageable steps. Do not set goals that are unachievable by what would otherwise be an equivalent of doomed-to-failure 'top-downing'. There is no doubt the curriculum needs to evolve to meet the requirements of the 21st-century labour market place and that change management is a people's business. Today's senior and middle managers employed in educational establishments will need people management skills in abundance to promote effective curriculum change. Mills (2006) urges: 'Let's take change by the hand and make a future and shape it before it grabs us by the throat.'

Chapter 2, 'Planning the curriculum: 14–19', looks at issues relating to planning and puts forward four models of planning curriculum change in the form of case studies.

Chapter 3, 'Approaches to planning the 14–19 curriculum: case studies', draws on case studies to provide an insight into different approaches towards developing the 14–19 curriculum

Chapter 4, 'Curriculum design and development', identifies and analyses the key priorities for managers in managing curriculum change and discusses the processes involved in change management through its various stages.

Chapter 5, 'Successful change management strategies', identifies and discusses a broad range of tried and tested strategies to introduce curriculum change effectively.

Teachers and managers frequently tell LSN that one of the most helpful aspects of their publications is the good practice audit checklists. This publication takes note of this feedback and includes 14 good practice checklists for managing curriculum change which can be found in Appendix 1.

Appendix 2 describes the quality standard RARPA ('recognising and recording progress and achievement') and shows how it can be implemented.

Ian Duckett, Development Adviser
14-19: Vocational Learning Support Programme
Learning and Skills Network

The curriculum for 14–19 year olds is getting broader and more work-related. It continues to be the subject of debate and change, mainly as a result of Government initiatives to help all learners achieve to their full potential. Curriculum managers and those involved in the process of curriculum planning and change will need to take this into consideration at all stages of the planning process. The changes require schools and colleges to plan and develop the curriculum to ensure they meet the needs of individual learners.

This book supports the delivery of the new GCE A-levels in vocational subjects, successors to the Vocational Certificate in Education (VCE) and provides a brief overview of these developments and the changes that teachers and lecturers in schools and colleges will need to make to curriculum design. It is based on good practice and aims to provide helpful guidance to those new to the qualification as well as those with experience of its predecessor. The new A-level qualifications are available from the three awarding bodies that offer other A-levels – AQA, Edexcel and OCR.

The following areas must be addressed when designing the post-16 vocational curriculum

- curriculum planning
- making curriculum change a priority
- planning and resources
- curriculum audit
- supporting staff to achieve success.

Curriculum design

Each school or college starts the process of curriculum development from a different point and will want to assess the advantages and disadvantages of a new curriculum in the light of a number of factors. These will include:

- the ethos of the school or college – how the curriculum will fit with its values and culture, its staff, learners and the wider community
- the strength of the rationale of embarking on a new curriculum – are there compelling educational reasons to get involved?
- how the new curriculum will meet the needs of individual post-16 learners
- the impact on staff, including the likely reaction from those involved, whether the expertise exists to deliver the new curriculum and whether support is available
- the support of parents – if it means offering unfamiliar courses or reduced options, will parents be supportive or will there be an uphill struggle to recruit?

- 4
- the curriculum available locally – are other local schools and colleges also changing the post-16 curriculum and does this affect your decision? Are there opportunities to collaborate to maximise the benefits for learners and share development costs? Are there implications arising from the role and policies of the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC)?
 - whether all the accreditation options for post-16 learners been explored – there is a variety of options available at different attainment levels.

Curriculum change

To make curriculum change happen, it must be given a high priority by the senior management team (SMT). The SMT must demonstrate its commitment to staff by:

- appointing an SMT member to take responsibility for coordinating the changes and instigating the staff development that is required
- providing a clear picture of how the curriculum change will affect teachers, learners and the centre as a whole
- ensuring that governors are involved in decisions about curriculum delivery; if they feel a sense of commitment they are far more likely to provide the support needed for success
- making curriculum development issues a priority for debate at SMT, to ensure that throughout the development, implementation and evaluation phases, SMT members are informed of progress and asked for advice
- ensuring that any changes to the curriculum are explicit in strategic, operational and development plans
- telling parents and learners about the changes, explaining the rationale, and reporting progress and successes to emphasise their importance and relevance.

Planning and resources

- being realistic about the time-scales and resources needed to implement effective change – most successful change comes about when staff have had nine to 12 months to plan and prepare
- establishing a budget dedicated to staff development
- taking into account people's readiness and capacity for change – look for innovators and enthusiasts and use them to motivate others
- setting realistic deadlines and keeping to them
- ensuring that the person responsible for timetabling understands and takes into account the implications of the new curriculum
- making use of external sources of support and advice, much of which is available free of charge (eg from the Learning and Skills Network (LSN), awarding bodies, local education authority networks etc)
- costing the demands on resources realistically (such as materials, specialist equipment, accommodation) and ensuring that the SMT is aware of the impact on the budget

- recognising the need for review and evaluation and providing staff with time for both; without this, important lessons may not be learnt and opportunities to share good practice will be lost.

Curriculum audit

Before starting curriculum development and change, most centres carry out an audit. This means asking key questions about the current curriculum and its strengths and weaknesses. An audit helps to target areas for development or decide whether to embrace an externally driven initiative. Key questions are:

- How will the changes to vocational qualifications – the removal of some qualifications and the introduction of others – affect the curriculum offer? Will it result in a broader, more meaningful curriculum and a well-balanced programme for all learners?
- Is there a sufficiently broad range of subjects that appeal to and motivate all learners? If not, what are the gaps? How can the changes to the new qualifications help?
- What skills do we want all our learners to develop? Are these developed adequately through the current curriculum?
- In what subjects and contexts are these skills likely to be developed best?
- Should work-related courses be offered as options in the curriculum or form part of an entitlement for all post-16 learners?
- What are the views of governors and parents? How and when should we involve them in the process of change?
- Does the curriculum reflect the needs of the community in terms of the local employment opportunities, training or courses available for further study?
- What impact will a new curriculum with new qualification options have on the timetable model currently in place?
- Could the school/college cooperate with other local institutions to broaden the curriculum?
- What are the views of staff and what impact will any change have on them? Do we have the expertise we need to implement new provision effectively? Are there implications for our department or faculty structures?
- If new courses are introduced, what implications will there be for accommodation, equipment and other facilities?
- What additional resources will be needed? Will meeting these needs lead to reductions for other areas and how will that be managed?

Supporting staff to achieve success

Teaching staff are more likely to respond positively to change if they are given additional support during the planning and development stages. The most valuable support the SMT can offer is time for staff to plan and design the new curriculum. Other ways to provide support include:

- 6
- providing a clear, positive vision of the changes and the benefits to learners
 - ensuring that a SMT member has a working knowledge and understanding of the demands of the new curriculum development
 - finding out about the strengths, talents, experience and abilities of staff
 - consulting staff from the outset to involve them and develop a sense of ownership and commitment to the initiative
 - providing training and INSET days to meet the professional development needs of the staff who are involved with implementing the new curriculum
 - involving staff and departments that are committed to change and innovation
 - explaining why staff are involved and the skills and experience they bring to the development of the new curriculum
 - making sure a senior member of staff is visibly available to advise and lead teachers in their preparations
 - holding regular meetings to ensure all staff, not just those directly involved in teaching or managing the new curriculum, are kept informed of developments
 - channelling resources to where they are most needed and ensuring that the new curriculum gets a fair deal in terms of budget.

The role and responsibilities of senior managers

Successful A-level programmes require backing and support by the SMT. Teaching staff and learners need to see that the SMT is enthusiastic and supportive of the new A-levels as a key part of the curriculum. Senior managers will do this by:

- having an SMT member responsible for overseeing all the new A-levels who understands what they involve for staff and learners
- making sure that the new A-levels are promoted as an integral part of the curriculum offer
- making sure that they devote attention to the needs of the new A-levels in terms of curriculum development, resources and access to professional development opportunities
- allocating adequate resources and treating the new A-levels equally with other courses
- enabling staff to undertake INSET and professional development activities in the vocational sector (such as attending awarding body INSET, visiting employers' premises etc)
- making sure there are effective channels of communication between the SMT, departments or faculties and the individual members of staff delivering the new A-level courses
- taking every opportunity to raise parents' and learners' awareness of the new A-level and celebrating learners' successes at promotional events or in literature issued to parents, potential learners and local businesses

The SMT needs to demonstrate its commitment to the new A-levels by:

- building a strong team, committed to making a success of the new A-level courses
- organising and securing funding for staff development and training
- informing staff about schedules affecting their work and the impact on the running of the new A-levels (eg exam and moderation dates)
- ensuring that appropriate quality assurance processes are in place for all new A-level courses
- ensuring that in each vocational area the course teams build and use links to employers and community organisations to provide a real ‘vocational flavour’ in learners’ courses
- keeping up to date with developments affecting the new A-levels (from the QCA and the awarding bodies) so that staff are aware of new requirements or deadlines etc
- ensuring that review and evaluation of delivery takes place regularly on each course
- leading the recruitment activities targeted at potential learners
- developing and maintaining links with neighbouring institutions where a school or college uses staff from those centres to help deliver the new A-level courses.

The role and responsibilities of the coordinator

Many schools and colleges will appoint a coordinator to oversee all the new A-levels. This is likely to be a senior member of staff with experience of overseeing post-16 education. The coordinator is responsible for:

- making sure that each course is genuinely ‘vocational’ in flavour, and bridges the gap between the classroom and the world of work – learners should have opportunities to experience being part of the workforce in their chosen vocational area
- providing an effective tutoring system so learners have access to advice and support on areas such as balanced and realistic learning programmes, induction activities, information about college or school procedures and support for ‘study skills’ across their entire programme; tutoring also enables staff to carry out regular reviews and to monitor progress
- ensuring that staff have recent experience of the vocational sector and identifying and securing funding for them to undertake professional development such as industrial placements (using the Education–Business Link Organisation (EBLO) teacher placement scheme to organise and fund teacher placements)
- making sure that the timetable takes account of the needs of the new A-level courses; successful courses require timetable ‘blocks’ so that learners have extended periods to concentrate on their work, usually a minimum of two hours per session
- making sure that the rooms and facilities are suitable (eg for using ICT and other equipment and access to school/college transport for visits off-site).

8 Managing the curriculum

Effective leadership at subject or course level is critical to the success of each of the new A-levels. Successful courses are usually managed by an effective course leader, who may be the department or faculty head or a subject specialist. The main duties of this person include:

- ‘unpacking’ the specifications so that all staff know exactly what is involved in teaching the course
- planning overall schemes of work against the timetable allocation for the year/two years of the course
- leading on establishing teaching and learning strategies
- leading on identifying employer or community links that give the course its vocational flavour and identifying where they should be used to complement classroom-based teaching and learning
- developing strategies to support the assessment undertaken for the course, including writing assignments for learners to meet the portfolio (coursework) assessment needs of the awarding body
- liaising with staff in other departments or faculties (eg specialists to support key skills work)
- liaising with the person responsible for learners’ learning resources
- ensuring that staff are setting targets and tracking and monitoring learners’ progress
- identifying and seeking approval for adequate teaching and learning resources (eg access to ICT facilities)
- researching and using local networks to help teachers to share ideas and good practice
- making use of the support and guidance available from the awarding bodies
- convening regular course meetings to which all contributing staff are invited and making sure they have an opportunity to put forward their views.

Research into curriculum planning emphasises the benefits of planning (Duckett and Moore 2005; Duckett and Stanley 2006). The following case studies provide an insight into different approaches toward developing the 14–19 curriculum. Each has a description of curricula characteristics and institutional responses surrounding particular initiatives and established practice with suggested staff development activities for practitioners wishing to develop their own related provision.

The case studies focus on partnership provision in a range of settings including neighbouring further education (FE) colleges, sixth form colleges, work-based learning providers, schools and one university.

They draw attention to a mixture of new initiatives and established practice including curricula innovation aimed to broaden provision, improve quality, and make effective use of resources. The cases highlight how government agencies support partnership developments, reflect different levels of agency involvement and show how local authorities and local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) have the resources and power available to undertake the role of local brokers.

The context to these case studies is the 14–19 agenda and government policy aimed at improving standards has actively encouraged increased collaboration between colleges, schools, work-based learning providers and employers. Although the 2005 White Paper 14–19 education and skills (DfES 2005) did not accept the more far-reaching curriculum proposals in the final Tomlinson report, it still required schools and colleges to work collaboratively. This is supported with targeted funding from local LSCs that fund particular government initiatives.

Case Study 1 Large scale LSC–LEA-led partnerships

This case study is characterised by the significant role local LSCs and local education authorities (LEAs) have in steering partnerships. The formation and funding of partnerships is a key feature. Formation of partnerships is usually a response to area-wide inspection action plans. Notably, regeneration funds, Local Initiative Development Funding (LIDF) and former Training and Enterprise Council legacy funding are used. The significance of this is that funds are not indefinite and normally last no longer than three financial years. In this case, local LSCs fund clusters of closely interrelated partnerships. A large number of providers for 14–19 year olds are in a city with varying travelling distances between them.

Background

The main drive behind this approach to partnerships is based on LSC and LEA local area planning arrangements, driven by the area-wide inspection action plan, and the

10 development of a distinct 14–19 phase. These relied on increasing collaboration between schools and colleges (within a defined geographical area) to rationalise and develop the curriculum, broaden choice, and drive up standards and achievement.

Case study outline

The partnerships have a local definition produced by the local LSC and LEA. In this case study this is defined as collaboration between all schools and colleges in a particular geographical area. The expectation is that partnerships seek to implement government policy on the 14–19 phase more effectively through some or all of the elements below:

- developing individual curricula pathways, including a vocational focus
- introducing common timetabling to increase the range of options to learners
- jointly delivering programmes, including teachers moving between sites
- increasing participation and raising standards
- introducing joint management and governance of provision between institutions
- introducing joint resources and funding streams.

Scale of activity

Currently this type of activity is restricted to a few locations, mainly cities. This case study is based in a large city and has taken up to two years to implement. There are a series of partnerships that started at different times over this period. Irrespective of size of partnership, each receives the same level of funding for the same duration. Additional funds are available to employ a partnership coordinator for a fixed period.

Duration of activity

The local LSC funding is initially for three years. Partnerships are given clear guidance on the duration and level of funding. The expectation is that partnerships develop approaches to funding during the initial three-year implementation. The partnership coordinators are expected to attend meetings at the local LSC, to plan provision, which in turn they discuss with their partners. In practice this does happen, though some coordinators exercise a degree of autonomy from the LSC.

Practical factors encountered

Areas where there have been ongoing problems over the first two years of the project include:

- common timetabling between institutions
- developing shared policies for management
- developing strategies for funding.

Other practical factors include ensuring there is consistent quality of teaching and learning between institutions and practical and legal issues such as transport and health and safety. Approaches taken in these instances are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Approaches taken to deal with practical difficulties with LSC–LEA partnerships

Practical factors	Approaches
Developing shared policies for management	Partnership handbook is approved by partners, LSC and LEA.
Ensuring there is a consistent quality of teaching and learning between institutions	There is joint curriculum and staff development in colleges, schools and work-based learning providers.
Practical and legal issues such as transport and health and safety	Local authority is involved (including giving legal advice).

Suggested staff development activities

Develop a series of partnership performance indicators that support quality assurance and planning. Headline targets could include pathways, participation, performance and progression (see Table 2).

12 **Table 2 Example indicators for partnership performance for pathways, participation, performance and progression**

Example indicators for partnership performance	Sub-indicators for partnership performance
Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure a minimum number of vocational options are available in each partnership. ■ Integrate 14–19 curricula developments into FE plans. ■ Pilot new provision (Level 1 and 2) programmes. ■ Undertake curriculum map, identifying gaps in provision. ■ Ensure there are a minimum number of links with external providers.
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have clear targets for increasing participation based on local plans. ■ Have a minimum number of links with schools. ■ Provide access to careers support across all partnerships.
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have clear targets for increasing achievement in development plans (including performance based on whole school cohort achievement analysis at Key stage 4).
Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrate Connexions support into operational working practice. ■ Establish curriculum progression pathways in all partnerships. ■ Have a set percentage of partnership learners who progress to Level 3 qualification? ■ Have a set percentage of partnerships learners who progress to Level 4 qualification? ■ Have a set percentage of partnerships learners who progress into employment?

Case Study 2 Localised FE-led partnerships (policy initiatives)

This case study is characterised by the significant role of a major Government initiative that has a national profile, with an emphasis on collaboration between educational institutions and employers. Another major factor is that the initiative is only supported with short-term funding, renewed yearly, based on the assumption that institutions would gradually pay the costs after the five-year programme has finished.

In this case, partnerships are evaluated on the percentage of learners that progress through the 14–19 curricula framework, and how many achieve. The focus is on small, localised partnerships with restricted places available for learners.

Policy background

The initial main drive behind this approach to partnerships is based on a local LSC responding to short-term national government policy. The role of the LSC is significant in that its remit covers post-16 education and training and FE colleges became the lead partners for partnerships. Similar to the previous case, partnerships were expected to develop the curriculum, usually with vocational courses, to broaden choice and to drive up standards and achievement.

Two examples of short-term national government policy initiatives are the Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP) and Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs). The IFP was introduced in 2002 by the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) to provide vocational learning opportunities at Key stage 4 (14–16). The IFP is delivered by means of partnerships between colleges, schools and other providers such as training providers and employers.

Case study outline

The partnership was defined by local partners and, importantly, defined by the contents of joint funding bids to local LSCs. It is notable, however that the bid did not include funds for quality assurance, including staff development. The local LSC requires bids to be submitted annually and can amend the terms of the contract. By comparison, there are indications that partnerships vary considerably in their approach and delivery across the country. Partnerships are ‘contractually’ obliged to implement LSC-prescribed performance indicators for:

- the development of vocational curricula pathways
- increasing participation and raising standards
- increasing progression.

Practitioners felt the local LSC had a ‘hands-on’ role with the partnership. There was concern that there had been three different LSC representatives at steering groups because of high staff turnover. Practitioners saw this as leading to a lack of consistency and continuity from the LSC over communications and working practice.

Scale of activity

There are almost 200 CoVEs, across the country, covering sector areas including childcare, catering and hospitality, hair, print media, retail and electrical services. It is possible that a large city can have up to 10 CoVEs. Funding (revenue and capital) is profiled over the first three years subject to satisfactory performance. The actual level of funding depends on the nature of the CoVE (capital intensive) and the partnership agreements.

The case study had attempted to link both their CoVE provision and IFP in order to produce a progression route for 14–19 year olds, and also demonstrate a commitment to government reforms. There are an estimated 300 IFP partnerships that have developed provision for around 40,000 Year 10 and 11 learners. There were tensions, however, within the department over the suitability of learners on the IFP and attempts were made to use a work-based learning provider as a 'silent' third partner for these learners.

Duration of activity

Both the CoVE and IFP are short-term funded programmes. The CoVE programme has worked to a fixed-term duration. On the other hand, it can be argued that the IFP has suffered from uncertainty because it is funded annually. Currently the programme has been extended to a fourth cohort, with a fifth expected. However, the programme links partners to performance outcomes and, in principle, failure to meet these outcomes could result in the termination of contracts. Practitioners, in particular middle managers, were under pressure from senior managers to generate income. The pre-16 provision was not generating sufficient funds, compared with post-16, and this created an uneasy tension.

Practical factors encountered

Some practical factors encountered are similar to Case Study 1. These include:

- common timetabling between institutions
- developing shared policies for management
- developing strategies for funding.

However, one factor that provided a major obstacle was achieving consistent quality of teaching and learning between institutions. One notable characteristic was that partners were keen to observe that the case study had the best tutors on the post-16 courses, and pre-16 courses were often taught by sessional tutors, or tutors 'who were under hours'. Approaches taken to some practical difficulties are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Approaches taken to deal with practical difficulties with localised FE-led partnerships

Practical factors	Approaches
Ensuring there is consistent quality of teaching and learning between institutions.	Teachers undertake work experience at partner institutions.
Providing transport between institutions	Institutions accept responsibility for transporting their own learners.

Despite concerns over the quality of teaching and learning on some programmes, the IFP has supported 90% of participating learners (first cohort) into further education or training post-16. Two-fifths (42%) of young people said that their participation in IFP had influenced their decision about their post-16 destination.

A cause for concern is the key finding from cohort 1 achievement that learners who took GCSEs in vocational subjects attained levels ‘commensurate’ with their prior attainment and those who took other vocational qualifications achieved fewer points than might be expected compared with similar learners who did not participate. This case study had much learner absence and poor retention during the early implementation of the programme.

Suggested staff development activities

Develop a series of partnership performance indicators that support quality assurance and planning. This could include approaches towards target setting and lesson observations (see Table 4).

Table 4 Example indicators for partnership performance for target setting, lesson observations and communication

Example indicators for partnership performance	Sub-indicators for partnership performance
Target setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embed target setting with improving learner performance.
Lesson observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Link lesson observation schedule to programmes of learning, and levels (avoid lesson observation schedule based on covering all tutors with one observation over the academic year).
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introduce reporting systems for absence.

Case Study 3 Customer-based partnerships (historical)

This case study is characterised by the nature of its development. Here, partnerships between institutions have grown over a period of many years. These are local, bespoke, grass-root developments based on meeting very specific needs of partners that have often been based around meeting the needs of low ability learners. However, exceptions can be found with sixth form school partnerships from single sex schools that pool resources where there is not sufficient resource to provide broadened provision.

In this case, there is no national evaluation of partnerships, other than each partner continues on the basis that they are gaining some benefit that warrants prolonging the partnership.

Policy background

As a result of the long-established historical development of bespoke customer-based partnerships there is little national policy on this area. Interestingly, both cases 1 and 2 overlap this case study and provide significant additional funding to institutions. It is surprising, then, that this customer-based provision still continues, where one institution pays for provision out of its own central funds.

The main drive behind this approach to partnerships is based on long-established local developments that meet very specific requirements determined by local institutions. Historically, these requirements have mainly been based around provision for low ability learners. These partnerships were around long before the Tomlinson 14–19 agenda and often focused on vocational courses that other institutions did not have the resources to deliver, such as construction and hairdressing.

Case study outline

The case study partnership was on the one hand loosely defined according to local partners' needs. Over the duration of this partnership it was not unusual for the number of partnerships to fluctuate and sometimes consisted of just a single partner. On the other hand, external associations are well founded as a result of long-established links with institutions that have useful working practices, based on good relations between practitioners at institutions.

Participants had varying views on the role of this partnership. Some tutors and FE practitioners saw it as a means of getting challenging learners out of the classroom and into workshops. Yet some vocational FE tutors saw the partnership as the colleges 'contribution towards the local community'. There appeared to be well-intentioned motives behind these remarks, yet there was an apparent lack of challenging outcome targets, and agreements were ad hoc, though strong between participants and based on a single letter of agreement.

Anecdotal evidence indicated that customer-based partnerships were founded on similar arrangements and varied considerably in approach and delivery across the country.

Customer-based partnerships were not 'contractually' obliged to implement LSC-prescribed performance indicators.

Scale of activity

The level of customer-based partnership activity is difficult to calculate because of the lack of national performance indicators, use of non-accredited courses, and the ad hoc individual agreements between institutions.

Duration of activity

There is no official start date to customer-based partnerships. One institution started links with a range of programme areas, including hairdressing and construction, at different times. Construction forged links in 2000, though there have been agreements reached before this date. Senior management had delegated responsibility for entering into partnerships with the head of programme areas. Notably, this changed with the advent of major national initiatives with funding attached that covered similar agendas. When these initiatives were introduced there was a notable decline in customer-based partnerships as institutions attempted to re-map existing activities onto 'new' initiative requirements.

Practical factors encountered

Participants on both sides of the partnership identified quality assurance as a substantial concern and also cited a historical lack of impetus by their associated institutions, to address quality. One possible explanation for this could be the problem was obscured by little or no achievement data, due to little use of accredited courses.

Moreover, schools often selected learners based on behavioral problems at school. Colleges saw these courses as catering for problem learners and did not select the most experienced tutors to deliver courses as there was not a set of exam results at the end.

Although customer-based partnerships still continue there is a move to subsume their management in other initiatives. This would seem to be a clear attempt towards standardising processes and may improve quality. For example, IFP started to focus on approaches to selection based on improving achievement results and this practice started to be adopted on other projects.

Sub-indicators for monitoring performance are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Sub-indicators for monitoring performance

Quality assurance	Sub-indicators for monitoring performance
Audit	Undertake a mapping exercise on all provision provided by an external partner for your institution
Embed	Check which provision is embedded within institution quality assurance systems – in particular self-assessment reports

Case Study 4 Customer-based partnerships (emerging)

This case study is based on the above characterisation, with a focus on involving work-based learning providers to extend a work-related experience for learners. Providers are still identifying areas of provision that they feel confident they can deliver well. At this stage, the ongoing emergence of this area means that findings are a reflection of early developments.

Policy background

The main drive behind this approach is a combination of the above case study and institutions combining traditional approaches to partnership with new curricula developments. There is a focus on developing the contribution of work-based learning providers to extend a work-related experience for learners.

This case study had a local LSC to lead and implement the new Young Apprenticeship/Key Stage 4 Apprenticeship. The role of the local LSC was significant as it had large financial resources to support this 'localised' programme. As well as funds, the local LSC employed two coordinators who worked at the LSC to support developments. The programme is targeted at 14–16 year olds who have the potential to achieve a Level 2 qualification (GCSE grade A–C equivalent). The programme gave learners the opportunity to access elements of a post-16 Apprenticeship while continuing with other studies at school. The programme typically involved one or two days a week out of school, but was still supported by the school and other providers (training providers and colleges). The Young Apprenticeship/Key Stage 4 Apprenticeship offers learners experience of vocational education in a real working environment, seeking to raise motivation, aspiration and achievement.

The local LSCs selected applications and eligible providers from FE colleges and work-based learning providers. The aim was to encourage the cohort to progress to post-16 courses. Early findings showed that some learners were keen to do this, but not always in the subject area they had studied.

Case study outline

In this case, based on a geographical location, a city, a Key Stage 4 Apprenticeship framework provided 200 places for learners recruited with the expectation that they would achieve a Level 2 qualification from a choice of 13 vocational areas. Institutions were expected to facilitate post-16 progression into apprentice and other vocational learning options.

Alongside this programme was a sub-initiative for Entry to Employment (E2E), which offered 80 places. In practice this course gave individualised learning programmes, with a vocational skills element, for what was cited as learners disengaged from education, or not expected to achieve five GCSEs (A*–C).

Scale of activity

The programme is still at an early stage and the local LSC had difficulty making the programme operational with a relatively short lead time.

The level of national funding was restricted and the local LSC looked to different funding streams to support the programme, including Area Wide Inspection funding, although these funds are available only for a limited period.

Duration of activity

The case study started to implement the programme just over one and a half years ago and the programme can be delivered over two years. This is supported by schools as the programme can then fit into the timeframe for Key stage 4.

Practical factors encountered

This initiative involves more work-based learning providers which has major consequences. The advantages are that providers have shown a good level of flexibility and responsiveness and, in particular, vary the content of lessons and offer 'real' work experience. On the other hand, although there has been scope for providers to tailor their offer to their strengths, there has been a need for greater coherence. For example, schools and learners would benefit from an understanding of how and why each course is structured. Moreover, teaching and learning are poor, retention bad, and there is an expectation of poor achievement with the first cohort of completers.

Teaching, learning, and timetabling have been factors that have influenced the programme's reputation. There is evidence that learners have not responded well to theory lessons, and in some cases colleges have provided 'twilight' sessions that have not helped. It is notable that the work-based providers did not include the pre-16 provision within their mainstream quality assurance systems. It was surprising that no lesson observations had been undertaken considering the problems over teaching and learning.

Case Study 5 Applied GCSE networks across Walsall schools

Case study outline

Groups of teachers from Walsall schools who are delivering the eight applied GCSE subjects meet regularly to share good practice and focus on raising standards in their subject area. They meet on employers' premises and involve the employers in the wide range of issues raised. For example, the business studies section of Wolverhampton University has enabled staff to gain access to Mintel and Keynote resources.

Scale of activity

Discussions in the meetings cover such subjects as forward planning, the impact of the timetable on success of delivering applied subjects, recruitment and selection of appropriate learners, staff training opportunities, the value of work experience, collaborative activities and employer involvement.

Nine science teachers from six Walsall schools were selected to take professional development placements during their holidays and have been placed with pollution control; environmental health; the street cleaning team; a forensics laboratory; Severn Trent Water; automotive engineers and the Walsall Manor Hospital. The outcomes from these experiences will provide a rich resource of contacts, ideas and classroom activity to enhance the delivery of the applied science course.

After these placements the science teachers plan to work collaboratively with the support of the vocational learning consultant to develop a joint event, bringing a large number of specialists together to meet learners, who will be allowed to interview them as a recognised element of their course work.

The engineering teachers are invited to work with Castings PLC in Brownhills to create a range of classroom resources, and the leisure and tourism teachers will focus a collaborative and interactive event on aspects of customer care at Ikea and Dudley Zoological Gardens.

Case Study 6 The University of Derby, Buxton

Case study outline

The University of Derby, Buxton, is located in England's highest town, Buxton, and has a network of distributed learning centres across the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales.

The University in Buxton has a particular responsibility to provide for learners in the High Peak, Derbyshire Dales and the north of the county. Widening participation progression and partnership development for the county are key areas of focus.

Scale of activity

There are four distinctive features of the University's mission.

- Learners can progress from further to higher education within one campus.

- Vocational and work-based learning opportunities are available to all at the University.
- The University aims to be first choice campus with a reputation for high standards.
- Widening participation and social inclusion is central to the University's role as the community university for Derbyshire

It is against this backdrop that the University's Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP) is delivered.

"Our IFP is designed to afford to young school age learners, in Years 10 and 11, the opportunity to attend the University one day a week, in order to gain vocationally related qualifications completely independent of their school curriculum. The provision has increased dramatically since its inception both in number of learners and breadth of experience offered and now involves eight partner schools, over 160 learners and four vocational areas of learning – catering, hairdressing and beauty therapies, motor vehicle engineering and childcare."

Practical factors encountered

"Although taught in discrete groups, the young learners have the opportunity to participate in everything that the University has to offer, including the pastoral system, learner support, age appropriate activities run by the Students' Union and the full range of the university facilities. They mix with older learners – up to and including the University's higher education students – in the social areas and it has been noted by several of the partner schools that this has had a markedly positive effect on the learners' behaviour and general maturity.

"Moves by the partner schools towards incorporating the programme within their own internal options grid have made a significant difference to the commitment and motivation of the IFP learners and have had a very positive impact on progression and retention.

"The move to the new Devonshire campus in the centre of the spa town of Buxton with its stunning new facilities has further improved learners' access to industry standard resources. This is a facet of their experience which they greatly appreciate, judging by their responses to the learner satisfaction questionnaires, which indicate that an average of 97% rate these aspects as good or better. The University's quality monitoring procedures have also identified some excellent practice and comments favourably on the use of resources and learning activities.

"The feedback received by the IFP team through the learner satisfaction questionnaires is extremely positive and shows that the learners value the programme, the teaching and the access they have to high quality resources and a more 'adult' environment. From anecdotal information, school reports and observation, it is obvious that the vast majority of the learners gain a great deal in maturity and self-esteem from being 'the youngest students in the University' and the pride that they and their parents take in their achievements is evident.

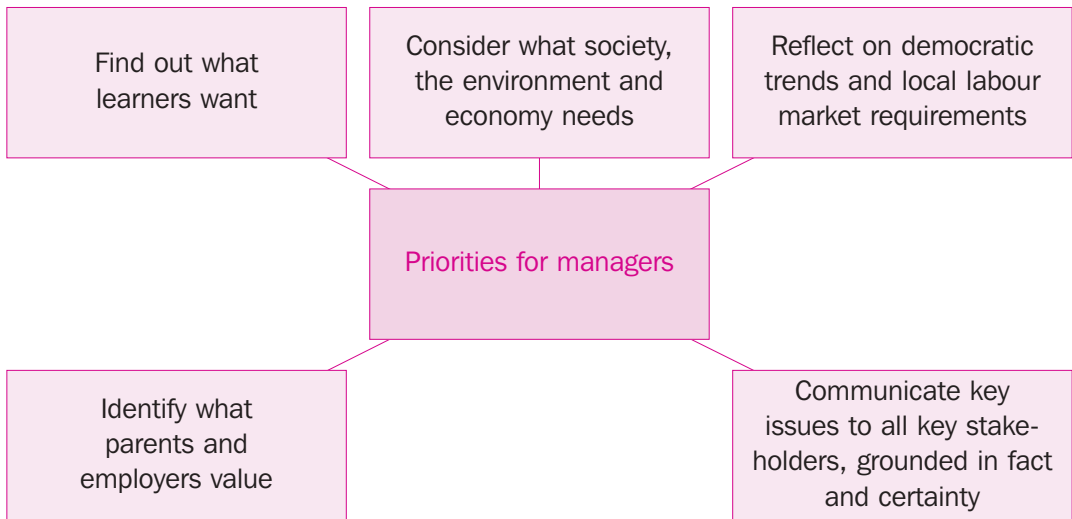
“The 75% of learners who participated in external visits responded very positively to them and many have told tutors that the opportunity to see how their university work fitted into the ‘real’ world has given them a greater motivation to succeed. However, it remains difficult to engage employers’ interest in such young learners and to attract them to come and speak or run workshops.

“The programmes offered give the learners the opportunity to gain an industrially recognised qualification, allowing progress onto related full-time programmes within the organisation or at another college or to progress on to an apprenticeship in a related area. The progression rates from the programme have been very pleasing indeed.

“The University is keen to commemorate our IFP learners’ achievements and once again this year the IFP Awards Evening was a great success, with a very high proportion of parents, carers and teachers attending to celebrate the learners’ successes and achievements. The team is also available to attend school parents’ evenings to discuss the learners’ progress in the context of their activities at school.

“As the first year in our new Devonshire campus draws to a close it is good to look back on our success with the IFP programme this year and we look forward to next September and celebrating the successes of our new intake!”

Finding out what young people most want is crucial when designing and developing a curriculum for the 21st century. The learner's voice is increasingly important in managing curriculum change, as it is in quality management. SMTs must consider what society, the economy and the environment need most, bearing in mind demographic trends and local labour market requirements. Of equal importance is what parents and employers most value. With curriculum change comes the inevitable uncertainty of what new qualifications involve, their structure, robustness, relevance, level, value and benefits to learners. Unpacking the key issues and communicating them to learners and key stakeholders is vital.



In educational terms the biggest constraint to curriculum change, such as the introduction of specialist Diplomas, is likely to be the fear factor of introducing a new qualification to staff and how it will impact on their roles and responsibilities. Teachers may feel a sense of threat at introducing a new qualification as they have a vested interest in delivering current provisions, such as traditional GCSEs (as opposed to GCSEs in vocational subjects). These have been enshrined and strengthened in the National Curriculum, and reinforced by what is perceived to be a high level of accountability, demanded by an over-assessed and highly accountable system, which many believe to be valid.

When introducing a new qualification as part of the drive to make learning more relevant and motivating, SMTs must be prepared for objections from subject lobbyists and traditionalists, as well as teachers who are opposed to change. For this reason designing a curriculum for the 21st century can be tough, but is not impossible. It is therefore recommended that managing curriculum change is undertaken in a systematic way.

Seek the views of young people

The learner's voice is an important means of obtaining young people's view and providing an insight to understanding their perceptions of current qualifications and delivery methods. Views might be obtained via questionnaire surveys and focus groups.

Managers should:

- identify learner groups
- design suitable and robust research tools such as questionnaires
- find out what learners think about current qualifications
- gather the views of learner groups about the proposed changes
- identify the benefits to learners of the introduction of the proposed curriculum change.

Obtain the views of teachers and other professionals

The next step is to ask professionals whether they think the current curriculum is appropriate, to identify any gaps in the course portfolio. Many teachers feel frustrated with the curriculum, but may feel – possibly through fear – that the curriculum should not be changed – principally because they have been forced to respond to too much change too quickly in the past. This highlights the importance of pacing any change to the curriculum carefully.

Consider:

- identifying professional groups
- designing suitable and robust research tools such as questionnaires
- obtaining the views of teachers and other professionals on the appropriateness of the current curriculum
- identifying any gaps in provision to meet the needs of all learners
- highlighting the experiences of staff to previous curriculum change
- finding out the views of professionals about the systems, procedures and documentation that they believe should be in place before introducing a new qualification.

Consider the views of wider society

The third step is to find out about the wider forces for change beyond the educational establishment to identify the major issues that are likely to affect learners in the future. It might be useful to bring together local and regional specialists and focus on the main

issues facing education from early childhood through to employment. This may help to define the key points within a revised curriculum and how they should be addressed to have value, status and impact. As many people believe that assessment which confirms achievement confers status, this should be a central consideration.

Ensure that you:

- identify appropriate social groups
- decide how you are going to obtain the views of wider social groups
- design appropriate research tools
- identify local and regional specialists
- define the major issues within a revised curriculum
- identify how the wider society feels the major issues within a revised curriculum can be addressed to meet the needs of all stakeholders
- recognise how to give new qualifications value and status
- highlight how to promote impact when introducing a particular qualification.

Establish a framework

The fourth step involves establishing a framework of curriculum objectives and sub-objectives or 'key elements'. The aim of the framework is to simplify the objectives of the curriculum. Ensure that the framework focuses on:

- developing individuals
- contributing to society
- benefiting the economy and the environment.

If learners, teachers and key stakeholders accept the objectives of the framework, it will become the pillar of the future curriculum. If the framework receives support, it will become the vehicle for effecting curriculum change. This has to be a key priority for managers at the planning stage if the implementation stage is to be a success.

Design and consult about detail

Asking subject specialists to contribute to the framework is a necessity and not an optional extra. All subject areas should establish how they can contribute. Ensure that the purpose of the revised curriculum is to prepare young people for life and work, and that developing skills and capabilities should become a central thrust of the Key stage 3 curriculum and its assessment.

Consider forming a small development group to establish the minimum entitlement proposals across all subject strands, drawing on the subject working groups' response to the framework. Subject specialists may be required to act as 'consultants' to this process, so subject vested interests are very tightly constrained. Encourage staff to adopt a problem-solving approach and to focus on flexibility over restriction.

The big challenge for the support phase is to demonstrate that curriculum coherence in the form of thematic approaches, as well as skills development, relevance and learner motivation, can be achieved without compromising the development of subject knowledge and skills.

Managers need to:

- identify and consult the subject specialists
- listen to the subject specialists and hear what is being said
- recognise how subject areas can contribute to a revised curriculum
- ensure that revisions to the revised curriculum improve the preparation of learners for life and work
- form development groups made of pro-active individuals with all subject strands represented
- develop the problem-solving skills of staff.

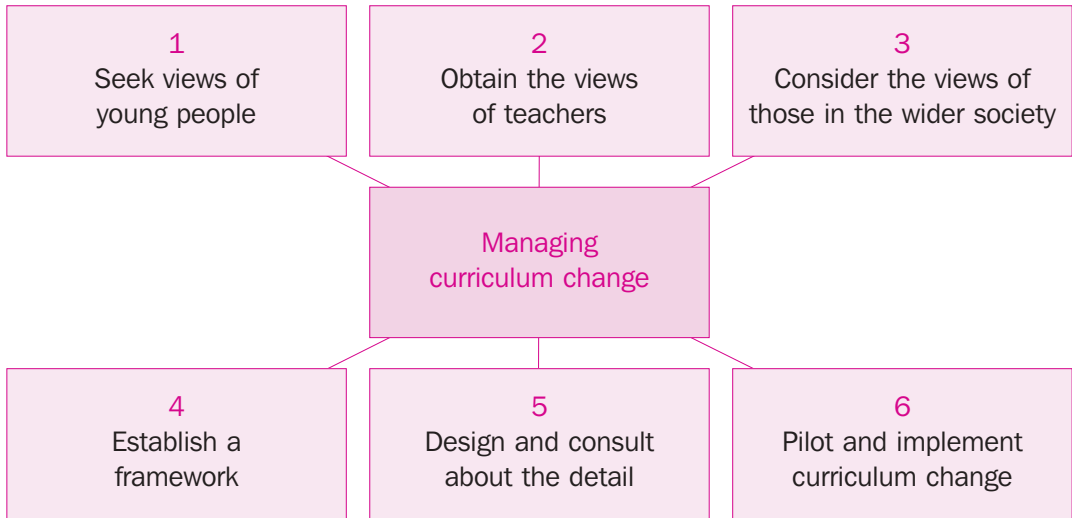
Pilot and implement

Once the detail has been worked out by involving subject specialists, the next stage is to decide which area or areas of the curriculum are going to be involved in the piloting of a new qualification or change in the curriculum. It might be worth considering working closely with your partner organisations to plan the implementation strategy and train the trainers while at the same time endeavoring to win hearts and minds.

Managers should:

- decide on an appropriate area of the curriculum to undertake the piloting of a new qualification or revision to the curriculum
- choose an area of the curriculum with a proactive leader
- select a subject area that has demonstrated innovation and a receptiveness to change in the past.

The curriculum change process



Successful change management strategies

Change management involves many factors: quality, resources, staff, learners and funding, to name but a few. But above all it is about processes and people – how to get where you want to be by maximising the full potential of all staff.

This chapter identifies challenges facing education establishments and examines tried and tested strategies and the way they can be used to implement curriculum change by giving details of proven change management strategies. Illuminating barriers and reducing the fear factor of introducing any changes has to be a priority for senior and middle managers as the curriculum is presented with a new era of curriculum change involving vocational learning.

Strategies include:

- providing effective leadership to drive change
- making curriculum change a high priority
- providing support to achieve success
- planning and resourcing for effective curriculum change
- ensuring that all learners participate in work-related learning as part of their entitlement
- working to your strengths and fielding your best team to participate in new curriculum initiatives
- making use of external partners to achieve successful curriculum change
- creating a shared approach as a vehicle for effective change
- recognising and using staff contributions
- disseminating good practice
- gaining the confidence of staff
- dealing with negative perceptions of change and professional development
- using accommodation to promote teamwork
- recognising and dealing effectively with staff ‘wants’ and ‘needs’.

Provide effective leadership to drive change

Effective leadership is key to creating a culture of change management within an organisation. Good subject sector categories, departments, faculties and curriculum areas tend to have an effective middle manager – a specialist in their field, who leads from the front by setting an example of hard work, flexibility, responsiveness and commitment. Effective leaders have the ability to listen and importantly hear what is being said, have developed excellent monitoring and coaching skills, and are able to provide feedback to teachers in a constructive and supportive manner. Managers who undertake consultation as merely lip-service – rather than genuinely to gain feedback to

improve systems, procedures and ultimately the curriculum offering – do not contribute effectively to successful curriculum change.

Managers need to:

- provide a clear vision and communicate it in an inspirational way
- explain what the change means in positive terms for staff and, most importantly, for learners
- arrange regular staff meetings as a means of updating staff
- have a clear rationale for change that is grounded in detailed facts and accurate research
- recognise and value the contributions made by individuals
- develop good listening skills and the ability to respond to what is being said
- have a clear communication plan at the outset and keep to it
- seek opportunities to talk to individuals, teams and the whole organisation about the change
- develop excellent mentoring and coaching skills
- create leaders of change at all levels and empower them to undertake the necessary action on the ground
- be clear and firm about what is negotiable and what is fixed, so that energies are maximised, conflict is reduced and the direction is obvious
- adopt a blend of top-down and bottom-up approaches
- demonstrate a solution-based approach
- ensure that the SMT is continually updated with the demands of a vocational curriculum.

Team building to promote effective curriculum change

There are very few organisations, including educational establishments, where decisions are made by one person. Successful schools and colleges are a collaboration of a team of people from different backgrounds. These individuals possess various degrees of unique talents, styles and personalities. When interacting successfully, these individuals – who may be members of SMTs, curriculum management teams (CMTs) and/or curriculum and departmental subject teams – will pool their ideas, make judgements and plan for the future.

The success of a management team and ultimately the curriculum change will depend on:

- talents
- abilities
- behaviour traits

It therefore follows that the balance and coherence of the managerial or curriculum team is crucial. All individuals have strengths and weakness. Research tells us that human strengths usually bring countervailing weaknesses. When teams contain members who have a variety of characteristics there is a greater probability that it will be successful. Some teams achieve complementary productivity; others are likely to result in intra-group competition. No one individual is perfect but, by blending the talents of individuals, a team can be perfect – one person's strength is another person's weakness, and team members compensate each other. Creating an ethos where individuals are willing to share their talents and abilities is a key challenge for SMTs in educational establishments around the country. However, it is crucial that all team members are seen to be making a valuable contribution.

An effective team has 'the right individuals' assembled together, which can produce a quality and quantity of work far higher than the sum of what the separate members could have produced on their own. It is of course for institutions to decide in which area of the school or college to pilot new curriculum initiatives. This decision may be based on areas of expertise, departments or faculties, curriculum areas with a track record of successfully delivering new vocational learning opportunities such as GNVQs, NVQs, GCSEs in vocational subjects and/or GCE Applied A-levels, or on local employer demand. The SMT may decide to co-opt individuals from other departments, faculties or curriculum areas because of their talents in a particular area – for example, having experience of resource management, a problem-solving approach to new curriculum initiatives or good coordination skills.

Getting these individuals to want to be apart of a team is again a challenge for SMT and proven strategies for promoting this can be found in section 5. Assembling a team is a bit like constructing plywood – layers of wood placed at cross-grain to each other, all very different but adding to the overall strength. It is widely believed that people in an organisation – and schools and colleges are no exception – are its most important resource.

Make curriculum change a high priority

Giving high priority to curriculum change is the first step to creating an environment where effective change can take place. The SMT needs to be committed to the new initiative and demonstrate its commitment to staff. To do this, its members need to be fully conversant with the demands the introduction of new qualifications, and in particular vocational learning, will place on the teaching and support staff and indeed the benefits that these new qualifications will bring to learners.

In the evolving world of vocational learning it is important to recruit a member of staff to the SMT who will be responsible for driving effective curriculum change, such as enhancing work-related learning. This person should have extensive experience and a proven track record of delivering and managing a vocational curriculum, together with up-to-date industrial or commercial experience in a relevant subject sector category. To

make such an appointment is one proven strategy to help demonstrate to teachers and support staff that the SMT is dedicated and enthusiastic about making changes to the curriculum, and that the teaching staff should also give it high priority. Some teaching staff believe that maximising funding, rather than making effective curriculum change, is the SMT's key priority. This perception can and does inhibit the successful management of change. It is evident therefore that managers need to demonstrate their priorities clearly.

If teachers believe that managers are only introducing new qualifications to improve their position in national league tables, or purely to increase funding opportunities, it will be an uphill battle to gain their commitment to curriculum change. By identifying the benefits to learners of introducing new qualifications to the institution's course portfolio, and mapping them against benefits to learners, staff will be more inclined to become involved and make curriculum change work on the ground.

Saying curriculum change is a high priority is one thing, demonstrating it is quite another. The daily and visible actions of the SMT will set the tone of all curriculum initiatives, whether positively or negatively. Managers need to communicate and demonstrate their priorities clearly. If the SMT does not appreciate the challenges that new qualifications such as the specialist Diplomas will bring to the daily lives of teachers and support staff, not least the implications to physical resources and continuous professional development (CPD), the LSN's in-house support programme can help.

Managers must:

- ensure that any changes to the curriculum are explicit in strategic, operational and development plans
- identify the barriers to introducing a new qualification effectively
- highlight the benefits of curriculum change to learners
- publicise the opportunities of curriculum change for teachers
- provide a clear picture of how the change will affect staff and learners, and the institution as a whole
- place curriculum change at the top of the agenda of the SMT and course team meetings of each department, faculty or curriculum area, and make it a standing item through the development, implementation and evaluation phases
- recruit to the SMT a member of staff who has a proven track record of delivering and managing a vocational curriculum, together with up-to-date industrial or commercial experience in a relevant subject sector category; make this person responsible for change management
- allocate senior staff in each department, faculty or curriculum area responsibility for making change happen (rather than creating complex and time-consuming reporting procedures and systems)

- 32
- ‘walk the shop floor’ – be visible and find out at first-hand what’s happening within the institution; use this as an opportunity to demonstrate commitment to the change
 - create and distribute a regular curriculum newsletter to all staff, parents, carers and other stake-holders to share information and minimise surprises
 - spread the word that work-related learning can and does increase learner motivation, improve attendance, bring learners back to a learning frame of mind and ultimately improve levels of achievement
 - provide adequate and appropriate physical and human resources, based on realistic and achievable targets, to make sure that the change actually happens.

Provide support to achieve success

Teaching staff are more likely to accept changes to the curriculum if they are given additional hands-on and relevant support during the development and implementation phases. Providing someone knowledgeable, experienced and respected by staff, whom teachers can turn to for active support when they need it, and giving time for them to consider how mandatory national curriculum requirements may be implemented at a local level, will benefit the change management process. Teachers have stated repeatedly that the greatest support they receive, and indeed appreciate, is having time to interpret mandatory curriculum changes and to translate them effectively at local level; this includes planning and implementing their job roles and responsibilities properly. These are some of the ways to provide support:

- Divide big changes into manageable, more familiar steps
- Let staff familiarise themselves with the changes by taking small steps first
- Develop the coaching skills of managers so that they spend less time ‘telling’ and more time ‘helping’ and ‘empowering’
- ‘Walk the shop floor’. Demonstrate your commitment to change by being visible and available for staff
- Ask how you can help staff and use ‘we’ and ‘us’ where possible to emphasise the fact that the change is a shared priority
- Channel resources to where they are most needed
- Help people to feel compensated for the extra effort and time required for implementing the change
- Give praise and take time to listen to people
- Be prepared to let people express feelings about the past and create excitement about the future
- Demonstrate that lessons are learned from past experiences
- Ensure that the SMT has a working knowledge and understanding of the demands of new curriculum initiatives. This will enable it to offer appropriate support to frontline staff
- Consider reviewing the learner–teacher ratio as a means of providing support where it is needed

- Make time available for a member of staff to trawl the websites of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), Learning and Skills Network (LSN) and awarding body regularly to obtain the latest information and disseminate it to all relevant staff. This will keep teachers up to date and ensure that they are compiling appropriate teaching and learning material
- Adopt a problem-solving approach
- Continually evaluate the methods, systems and procedures involved in implementing curriculum change and be prepared to make amendments where necessary.

Plan and provide resources for effective curriculum change

Curriculum change is most effective when it is planned for effectively, within a feasible lead-in time. This includes costing the process in terms of resources and time. For example, teaching staff may need time – individually and collectively as course teams – to interpret changes to the national curriculum and the introduction of new qualifications, and to consider how they affect the delivery of their programme, subject sector or course portfolio, and the implications to day-to-day management.

It is vital that time is set aside for teachers to undertake industrial practices linked to their teaching. Allocating a realistic amount of time and resources to change management will help to ensure that change is a success and to reinforce the SMT's commitment to the initiative. Most new curriculum initiatives make demands on resources, such as specialist equipment and accommodation. Rooms for practical activities will be highly sought after to meet the needs of work-related learning. Plan for this anticipated demand. If teachers see that accommodation and physical resources are not only planned for but are in place, they will be encouraged to become involved in new initiatives.

Managers should:

- be realistic about the timescales and resources needed for effective change, taking into consideration people's readiness and capacity for change
- look for pioneers and innovators who can motivate others
- allow for degrees of participation at the planning stage
- define what is non-negotiable and leave room for choices to be made
- encourage more efficient working; set deadlines by which certain outcomes should be agreed
- ensure that time is made available for staff to undertake work placements linked to their teaching commitments
- schedule opportunities for teachers to build appropriate links with industry
- ensure that timetablers are aware of the needs of a vocational curriculum at the planning stage; give consideration to blocks of time for work experience
- remember that implementing a change takes time; institutions that have introduced

curriculum change effectively have allowed 9–12 months for ‘active’ planning and preparation

- eliminate casualties of curriculum development by carrying out effective planning, re-training and CPD
- include a communication strand in the plan that promotes openness rather than secrets.

Ensure that all learners participate in work-related learning as part of their entitlement

All young people should have an opportunity to participate in work-related learning, particularly at Key stage 4. Work-related learning is not just for less able learners. If that is how it is perceived by the SMT, teachers, learners and parents/carers will interpret it as low-quality provision, and this in itself will contribute to low self-esteem of learners. All young people have the right to enjoy the benefits of work-related learning. Learners’ behaviour and ultimately their ability to achieve is a reflection of the expectations that teachers and parents/carers have of them. All learners, regardless of their level of ability, crave relevance – relevance to their personal and career goals. Vocational learning has to date proved beneficial to learners and employers.

Priorities for managers need to include:

- designing a relevant and motivating curriculum
- linking work-related pathways to community regeneration, where appropriate
- aiming to certificate all learning experiences
- undertaking effective timetabling to promote a flexible curriculum that integrates academic qualifications and work-related learning, and encourages learners to undertake out-of-school vocational activities without it proving detrimental to their other studies
- using real work situations in teaching and learning sessions rather than hypothetical scenarios
- incorporating employer involvement in curriculum planning, design and development
- using the experiences of learners who have part-time jobs
- celebrating success that raises the esteem of learners, parents/carers and staff; publicising success stories to increase the take-up of work-related programmes
- providing high-quality work-related learning at Key stage 4, which can increase progression into further education
- using work-related learning as a vehicle to improve attendance, discipline and the image of the school
- ensuring that work-related learning is an integral part of the curriculum, not a bolt-on extra.

Work to your strengths and field your best team to participate in new curriculum initiatives

Working together, the whole institution can be your best team. The diverse strengths of individual staff members can make the teaching team strong if they are used sensitively and appropriately. Take the time to find out the strengths, talents and abilities of your teaching team by undertaking a thorough skills and experiences audit. Just because a member of staff has been recruited to undertake a specific role, does not mean they do not have other strengths, talents and abilities that could be used within the institution to contribute to the delivery of new vocational learning programmes. Encourage teaching staff to share their expertise. It could benefit them and the educational establishment.

Managers should:

- find out the strengths, talents and abilities of staff
- undertake an official skills audit to find out individual's interests and experiences
- map skills to specific elements of curriculum change at an early stage of planning
- create a database of experience and expertise and keep it up to date
- when staff participate in a new curriculum initiative, explain why they are involved and what skills and experience they bring to it
- select staff within subject sector categories, departments, faculties and curriculum areas who are committed to change and continually demonstrate their cooperation; enthusiasm is infectious
- make opportunities available for all staff to be involved in new curriculum initiatives; give opportunities for them to benefit from the spin-offs of the changes, for example teaching and learning styles
- work-related learning offered within one subject sector category, department, faculty or curriculum can be used to empower staff, creating ownership.

Make use of external partners to achieve successful curriculum change

Institutions that have succeeded in implementing curriculum changes have had the support of many individuals and organisations.

Raise the awareness of parents/carers to new curriculum initiatives and involve them at every opportunity. Gain their support in obtaining the commitment of learners to play their part in curriculum change. Use the mother who works in a travel agency, the father who is a hotel manager, the elder brother who is a nurse and the sister who is a mechanic; all parties can make valuable contributions to the delivery of a work-related learning curriculum. At every opportunity, ask yourself whether they could provide materials to make teaching and learning more authentic, or whether they could offer work experience to learners.

Staff need to:

- make contact, develop and maintain productive links with other local educational establishments
- where needed, consider buying in expertise to deliver units of the curriculum within your educational establishment; this could promote the dissemination of good practice and contribute to a change of culture
- if appropriate, develop links with specialist companies to offer NVQs
- foster strong industrial links
- make full use of awarding bodies' regional staff and resources
- develop productive links with local EBLOs and take full advantage of support they offer
- consider the EBLO teacher placement scheme to provide appropriate work experience placements for staff
- participate in local and regional networks and get involved in writing groups to produce assignments and other teaching materials with colleagues; make full use of industry trade boards, where possible.

Create a shared approach as a vehicle for effective change

Curriculum changes, such as the 14–19 initiatives, GCSEs in vocational subjects and applied A-levels, have been introduced by the government using a top-down approach. It does not follow that the best way to interpret and adopt the changes at local level is by a curriculum manager also taking a top-down approach.

For curriculum initiatives and quality systems to work, they need to be owned by the teaching staff who have a vested interest in their success. New systems, procedures and initiatives work best when they are introduced bottom-up and owned by the staff who are required to implant them. Teaching staff ought to be given an opportunity to share in the responsibility for shaping curriculum change and the quality systems that ultimately they will be required to implement. Educational establishments with a democratic academic board, with strong teaching representation, help to create a shared approach to curriculum change.

Managers need to:

- set up working groups that have a clear remit, reporting and accountability lines
- create action research groups to inform policy and strategy
- use focus groups to find out what people think and let that determine how best to move forward
- create quality improvement groups to address specific issues
- give stakeholders the opportunity to shape the future
- develop the coaching skills of managers so that they spend less time telling and more time helping and empowering.

Recognise and use staff contributions

Using the expertise of staff can have positive effects on instigating change and can improve staff morale. The schools and colleges that are more successful than others at change management are those that consult with staff, demonstrate to teachers and support staff that they are valued, and show that the SMT is committed to the initiative and open to suggestions to promote continual improvement and effective curriculum change. This also creates a sense of teamwork. Managers should:

- publicise individual and group contributions to new initiatives
- celebrate success
- build effective teams, which include individuals with recognised expertise and experience
- develop the listening and consultative skills of managers
- orchestrate sessions that encourage participation and teamwork and discourage blocking manoeuvres and other policies.

Disseminate good practice

Develop a mechanism for disseminating good practice across the institution. Staff and subject sector categories, departments, faculties or curriculum areas not involved in a particular curriculum initiative can benefit indirectly from lessons learned. Look for evidence of previous success and identify and use champions to further change.

Middle managers close to the ground should:

- use good practice to influence a change of culture
- use lessons learned from previous curriculum initiatives
- compile assignments and teaching and learning materials as a team to share good practice
- organise team teaching sessions
- use teaching mentors
- participate in reflective practices so that good practice can include alternative ways of doing things
- arrange dissemination of good practice briefing sessions
- provide INSET days where colleagues share experiences in a structured way.
- publicise innovations and good practice in the institution's newsletter.

Gain the confidence of staff

It is vital that staff who are ultimately responsible for curriculum change have professional credibility in the eyes of teaching staff. To gain credibility, curriculum, staff development and quality managers need to have qualified teacher status, a current working knowledge of what is being taught, an understanding of the demands of teaching and learning, and active involvement in professional development activities

38 linked to curriculum change and quality initiatives relating to vocational learning.

Managers at all levels must:

- recognise that perceptions shape attitudes and influence behaviour and that these may need to be addressed for change to be effective
- have a clear communication strategy that is applied at all stages of the change
- ensure that managers at all levels regularly undertake appropriate CPD
- ensure that managers maintain an up-to-date working knowledge and understanding of the curriculum
- talk to learners as part of a systematic approach to quality – the learner’s voice is ever crucial in curriculum development and change
- develop the listening skills of managers
- look for opportunities to communicate with staff about curriculum matters and how any changes will impact on them
- organise workshops and training sessions on curriculum issues
- respond to staff queries with clear, non-threatening explanations
- encourage staff to attend group meetings and work as a team
- praise strengths and contributions, and appreciate time invested.

Deal with negative perceptions of change and professional development

The SMT and middle managers can be seen as an avoidable cost that takes away resources from the real business of teaching and learning. Staff need to see that managers are committed to the learners, staff, effective change management and the quality of provision. Managers at all levels who do not stick to action plans or fail to adhere to recommendations made by internal and external inspection teams and external examiners or moderators discourage teaching staff from improving the quality of provision. SMTs who do not adequately resource teaching areas in preparation for the delivery of new qualifications are sending out messages to teachers that it can be delivered ‘on the cheap’. This approach only serves to demoralise staff and downgrade provision.

Staff need to be kept informed of curriculum change and be given the opportunity to take part in CPD activities. If an institution fails to invest in its staff, it can leave them feeling undervalued and ill-prepared for any curriculum changes.

Managers at all levels should:

- show that managers are committed to learners, staff, curriculum change and the quality of provision
- adhere to action plans and recommendations made by inspectors and external examiners and moderators
- provide staff with appropriate information to keep them fully informed

- ensure that staff have the necessary CPD to meet the changing needs of the curriculum.

Use accommodation to promote teamwork

Small staff rooms can isolate staff and make it difficult to promote the team ethos required to manage change successfully. Physically isolated staff can develop a psychological detachment from what is going on and may respond less well than others to change. Where whole teams are accommodated near to each other it can contribute positively to promoting a team ethos. Therefore managers should:

- provide staff rooms where colleagues can meet as course teams to discuss curriculum change and interpret the implications and benefits of change for them and their learners at local level
- use the accommodation available to promote a team ethos.

Recognise and deal effectively with staff 'wants' and 'needs'

Teaching staff want and need support, effective leadership, open lines of communication and positive relations between themselves and the SMT if change management is to be instigated effectively. The majority of staff also want to influence the design of the curriculum and the quality systems that monitor it so that they will bring meaningful benefits to themselves and their learners.

Staff, including teachers, should be given an opportunity to express their opinion about curriculum changes and to put forward any suggestions they might have. If staff are consulted they will feel that their professional opinion is of value and recognise that the SMT is putting their experience to good use.

Some form of CPD activity, linked to the course portfolio and long and short-term goals of the organisation, can help to address professional needs and wants within an institution. CPD managers could be given a budget to fund staff training in curriculum change and quality improvement mechanisms.

Managers must:

- provide strong and effective leadership, open lines of communication and promote positive relationships between teaching staff and the SMT
- consult staff and make them feel that their opinions are valued
- appoint a CPD manager with a delegated budget linked to curriculum change.

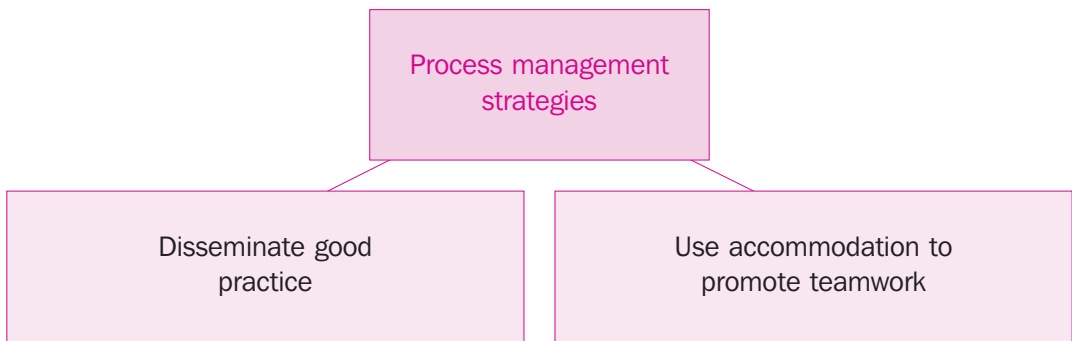
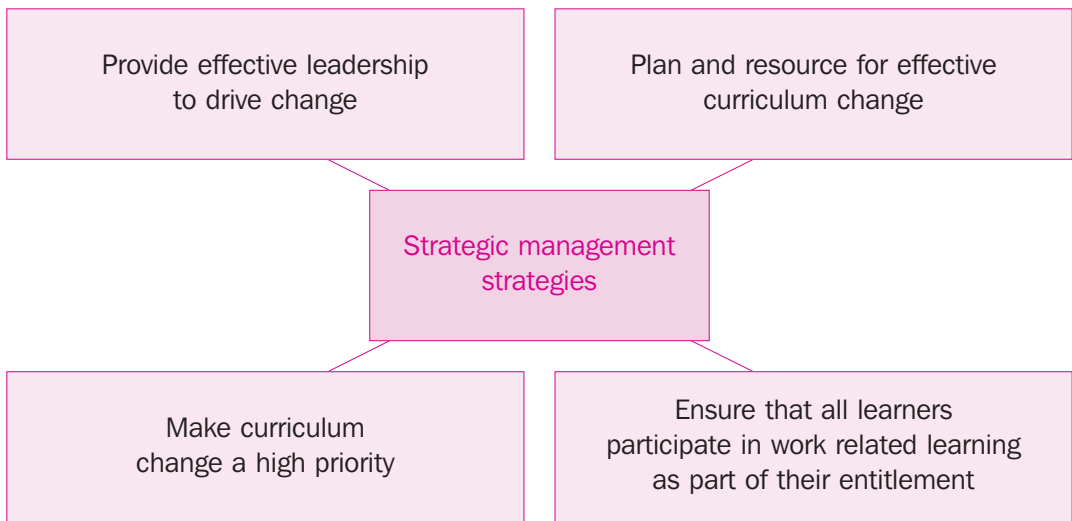
The strategies discussed in this chapter can be group as follows:

- people management strategies
- strategic management strategies
- process management.

There should be no surprises to learn that people management strategies form the majority of strategies put forward to promote effective management of curriculum change.

People management strategies





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Teachers and managers tell us that one of the most useful aspects of LSN publications are audit checklists provided to support CPD activities in a range of educational providers to develop the skills of senior and middle managers in promoting effective curriculum change. This publication includes 14 CPD good practice checklists, on:

- providing effective leadership to drive change
- making curriculum change a high priority
- providing support to achieve success
- planning and resourcing for effective curriculum change
- ensuring that all learners participate in work-related learning as part of their entitlement
- working to your strengths and fielding your best team to participate in new curriculum initiatives
- making use of external partners to achieve successful curriculum change
- creating a shared approach as a vehicle for effective change
- recognising and using staff contributions
- disseminating good practice
- gaining the confidence of staff
- dealing with negative perceptions of change and professional development
- using accommodation to promote teamwork
- recognising and deal effectively with staff 'wants' and 'needs'.

Checklist 1: Providing effective leadership to drive change

Do you:	Yes	No
provide a clear vision and communicate it in an inspirational way?		
explain what the change means in positive terms for staff and, most importantly, for learners?		
arrange regular staff meetings as a means of updating staff?		
have a clear rationale for change that is grounded in detailed facts and backed up by accurate research?		
recognise and value the contributions made by all individuals?		
possess good listening skills and the ability to respond to what is being said?		
have a clear communication plan at the outset and keep to it?		
seek opportunities to talk to individuals, teams and the whole organisation about the change?		
develop excellent mentoring and coaching skills?		
create leaders of change at all levels and empower them to undertake the necessary action on the ground?		
communicate clearly and firmly about what is negotiable and what is fixed, so that energies are maximised, conflict is reduced and the direction is obvious?		
adopt a blend of top-down and bottom-up approaches?		
demonstrate a solution-based approach?		
ensure that the SMT is continually updated with the demands of a vocational curriculum?		

Checklist 2: Making curriculum change a high priority

Do you:	Yes	No
ensure that any changes to the curriculum are explicit in strategic, operational and development plans?		
identify the barriers to introducing a new qualification effectively?		
highlight the benefits of curriculum change to learners?		
publicise the opportunities of curriculum change for teachers?		
provide a clear picture of how the change will affect staff and learners, and the institution as a whole?		
place curriculum change at the top of the agenda of the SMT and course team meetings of each department/faculty/curriculum area and make it a standard item through the development, implementation and evaluation phases?		
recruit to the SMT who has a proven track record of delivering and managing a vocational curriculum, together with up-to-date industrial or commercial experience in a relevant subject sector category and effective change management?		
make this person responsible for change management?		
allocate senior staff in each department/faculty/curriculum area responsible for making change happen (rather than create complex and time-consuming reporting procedures and systems)?		
'walk the shop floor'?		
create and distribute a regular curriculum newsletter to all staff, parents, carers and other stake-holders to share information and minimise surprises?		
spread the word that work-related learning can and does increase learner motivation, improve attendance, bring learners back to a learning frame of mind and ultimately improve levels of achievement?		
provide adequate and appropriate physical and human resources, based on realistic and achievable targets, to make sure that the change actually happens?		

Checklist 3: Providing support to achieve success

Do you:	Yes	No
divide big changes into manageable, more familiar steps?		
let staff familiarise themselves with the changes by taking small steps first?		
develop the coaching skills of managers so that they spend less time 'telling' and more time 'helping' and 'empowering'?		
demonstrate your commitment to change by being visible and available for staff?		
ask how you can help staff and use 'we' and 'us' where possible to emphasise the fact that the change is a shared priority?		
channel resources to where they are most needed?		
help people to feel compensated for the extra effort and time required for implementing the change?		
give praise and take time to listen to people?		
let people express feelings about the past and create excitement about the future?		
demonstrate that lessons are learned from past experiences?		
ensure that the SMT has a working knowledge and understanding of the demands of new curriculum initiatives?		
consider reviewing the learner–teacher ratio as a means of providing support where it is needed?		
make time available for a member of staff to regularly trawl the websites of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), Learning and Skills Network (LSN) and awarding body to obtain the latest information and disseminate to all relevant staff?		
adopt a problem-solving approach?		
undertake continual evaluation of methods, systems and procedures involved in implementing curriculum change and are you prepared to make amendments where necessary?		

Checklist 4: Planning and resourcing for effective curriculum change

Do you:	Yes	No
ensure that you are realistic about the timescales and resources needed for effective change, taking into consideration people's readiness and capacity for change?		
look for pioneers and innovators who can motivate others?		
allow for degrees of participation at the planning stage?		
define what is non-negotiable and leave room for choices to be made?		
encourage more efficient working?		
set deadlines by which certain outcomes should be agreed?		
ensure that time is made available for staff to undertake work placements linked to their teaching commitments?		
schedule opportunities for teachers to build appropriate links with industry?		
ensure that timetablers are aware of the needs of a vocational curriculum at the planning stage?		
keep uppermost in your mind that implementing a change takes time?		
eliminate casualties of curriculum development by carrying out effective planning, re-training and CPD?		
include a communication stand in the plan that promotes openness rather than secrets?		

Checklist 5: Ensuring that all learners participate in work-related learning as part of their entitlement

Do you:	Yes	No
ensure you are designing a relevant and motivating curriculum?		
link work-related pathways to community regeneration, where appropriate?		
aim to certificate all learning experiences?		
undertake effective timetabling to promote a flexible curriculum that integrates academic qualifications and work-related learning, and encourages learners to undertake out-of-school vocational activities without it proving detrimental to their other studies?		
use real work situations in teaching and learning sessions rather than hypothetical scenarios?		
incorporate employer involvement in curriculum planning, design and development?		
use the experiences of learners who have part-time jobs?		
celebrate success that raises the esteem of learners, parents/carers and staff?		
provide high-quality work-related learning at Key stage 4, to increase progression into further education?		
use work-related learning as a vehicle to improve attendance, discipline and the image of the school?		
ensure that work-related learning is an integral part of the curriculum, not a bolt-on extra?		

Checklist 6: Working to your strengths and fielding your best team to participate in new curriculum initiatives

Do you:	Yes	No
find out the strengths, talents and abilities of staff?		
undertake an official skills audit to find out individual's interests and experiences?		
map skills to specific elements of curriculum change at an early stage of planning?		
create a database of experience and expertise and keep it up to date?		
explain to staff why they are involved in new curriculum initiatives and what skills and experience they bring to it?		
select staff within subject sector categories, departments, faculties and curriculum areas that are committed to change and continually demonstrate their cooperation?		
make opportunities available for all staff to be involved in new curriculum initiatives?		
use work-related learning offered within one subject sector category, department, faculty or curriculum to empower staff, creating ownership?		

Checklist 7: Making use of external partners to achieve successful curriculum change

Do you:	Yes	No
make contact, develop and maintain productive links with other local educational establishments?		
consider buying in expertise to deliver units of the curriculum within your educational establishment?		
develop links with specialist companies to offer NVQs?		
foster strong industrial links?		
make full use of awarding bodies' regional staff and resources?		
develop productive links with local EBLOs and take full advantage of support they offer?		
consider the EBLO teacher placement scheme to provide appropriate work experience placements for staff?		
participate in local and regional networks and get involved in writing groups to produce assignments and other teaching materials with colleagues?		
make full use of industry trade boards, where possible?		

Checklist 8: Creating a shared approach as a vehicle for effective change

Do you:	Yes	No
set up working groups that have a clear remit, reporting and accountability lines?		
create action research groups to inform policy and strategy?		
use focus groups to find out what people think and let that determine how best to move forward?		
create quality improvement groups to address specific issues?		
give stakeholders the opportunity to shape the future?		
develop the coaching skills of managers so that they spend less time telling and more time helping and empowering?		

Checklist 9: Recognising and using staff contributions

Do you:	Yes	No
publicise individual and group contributions to new initiatives?		
celebrate success?		
build effective teams, which include individuals with recognised expertise and experience?		
develop the listening and consultative skills of managers?		
orchestrate sessions that encourage participation and teamwork and discourage blocking manoeuvres and other policies?		

Checklist 10: Disseminating good practice

Do you:	Yes	No
use good practice to influence a change of culture?		
use lessons learned from previous curriculum initiatives?		
compile assignments and teaching and learning materials as a team to share good practice?		
organise team teaching sessions?		
use teaching mentors?		
participate in reflective practices so that good practice can include alternative ways of doing things?		
arrange dissemination of good practice briefing sessions?		
provide inset days where colleagues share experiences in a structured way?		
publicise innovations and good practice in the institutions newsletter?		

Checklist 11: Gaining the confidence of staff

Do you:	Yes	No
recognise that perceptions shape attitudes and influence behaviour – these may need to be addressed for change to be effective?		
have a clear communication strategy, which is applied at all stages of the change?		
ensure that managers at all levels regularly undertake appropriate CPD		
ensure that managers maintain an up-to-date working knowledge and understanding of the curriculum?		
talk to learners as part of a systematic approach to quality – the learner’s voice is ever crucial in curriculum development and change?		
develop the listening skills of managers?		
look for opportunities to communicate with staff about curriculum matters and how any changes will impact on them?		
organise workshops and training sessions on curriculum issues?		
respond to staff queries with clear, non-threatening explanations?		
encourage staff to attend group meetings and work as a team?		
praise strengths and contributions, and appreciate time invested?		

Checklist 12: Dealing with negative perceptions of change and professional development

Do you:	Yes	No
show that managers are committed to learners, staff, curriculum change and the quality of provision?		
adhere to action plans and recommendations made by inspectors and external examiners and moderators?		
provide staff with appropriate information to keep them fully informed?		
ensure that staff have the necessary CPD to meet the changing needs of the curriculum?		

Checklist 13: Using accommodation to promote teamwork

Do you:	Yes	No
provide staff rooms where colleagues can meet as course teams to discuss curriculum change and interpret the implications and benefits of change for them and their learners at local level?		
use the accommodation available to promote a team ethos?		

Checklist 14: Recognising and deal effectively with staff's 'wants' and 'needs'

Do you:	Yes	No
provide strong and effective leadership, open lines of communication and promote positive relationships between teaching staff and the SMT?		
consult staff and make them feel that their opinions are valued?		
appoint a CPD manager with a delegated budget linked to curriculum change?		

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), in partnership with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), has developed new measures of success, which are designed to assess the performance of LSC-funded providers, for the purposes of accountability and to stimulate reflection and quality improvement.

The aim of the programme is to measure the success of learners and the performance of education and training providers more accurately and fairly. In 2005 three of the measures were implemented or piloted within the sector. These are qualification success rates (QSRs), value added and distance travelled (VA/DT) for 16–19-year-old learners, and recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA). The first two are statistical measures, the third – RARPA – is a quality standard which is not age-limited.

Table 7 shows the five stages of RARPA, the key criteria for implementation and makes some suggestions about how each stage could be evidenced. It is extremely important to note that the evidence should be fit for purpose and that this is not a prescriptive list of requirements for all organisations. For most, the introduction of RARPA requires only a modification or development of existing systems rather than something new. Some schools and colleges may be using the process without referring to it as ‘RARPA’. The staged process is designed to ensure a high-quality experience for the learner and to maximise success in several ways:

- It encourages learners to take responsibility for their own learning and achievements by helping them to set their goals and monitor their own progress towards them.
- It allows teachers and managers to ensure learning is taking place and to recognise the achievement arising from this learning.
- It meets the requirements of the CIF.
- It is a flexible model for quality assurance and quality improvement, which can be adapted for a variety of provision and awards.
- It is intended to be fit for purpose and, if properly implemented, should not produce additional bureaucracy. Organisations which have established effective QA and QI processes will be able to accommodate RARPA.
- Staff are generally enthusiastic about RARPA because of its evident benefits to learners.

Table 7 The five stages of RARPA

RARPA standards and CIF references	Key criteria
<p>1 Aim(s) of programme or award, appropriate to an individual learner or groups of learners.</p> <p>CIF questions</p> <p>3 How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?</p>	<p>Have the aims of the programme been communicated clearly to learners before they make a decision about their individual route to achievement?</p>
<p>2 Initial assessment to establish the learner's starting point.</p> <p>CIF questions</p> <p>1 How well do learners achieve?</p> <p>2 How effective are teaching, training and learning?</p> <p>4 How well are learners guided and supported?</p>	<p>Have the learner's previous achievements, current skills and learning needs been adequately considered before a decision has been made about a particular route to achievement?</p>
<p>3 Learning outcomes</p> <p>CIF questions</p> <p>1 How well do learners achieve?</p> <p>2 How effective are teaching, training and learning?</p> <p>3 How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?</p>	<p>Has a set of learning outcomes been agreed with each learner that is consistent with their learning goal(s), is based on their identified needs and challenges them to make real progress in their achievement? Will there be opportunities to revise these learning outcomes?</p>
<p>4 Review of progress</p> <p>CIF questions</p> <p>1 How well do learners achieve?</p> <p>2 How effective are teaching, training and learning?</p>	<p>Have learners been given regular opportunities to assess progress towards learning outcomes and to review their planned route to achievement in the light of their progress towards these outcomes?</p>
<p>5 Recognising achievement</p> <p>CIF questions</p> <p>1 How well do learners achieve?</p> <p>2 How effective are teaching, training and learning?</p> <p>4 How well are learners guided and supported?</p>	<p>Has the success of individual learners in reaching their planned goal (s) been recognised through a process appropriate to their needs that summarises their achievements and identifies possible future goals?</p>

Examples of evidence for internal monitoring and external use

- Clear information for learners about the aims of specific programmes and the awards to which they may lead
 - Processes for individual learning and assessment planning
 - Learner feedback showing the learner understood the options available before enrolling.
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- Records of outcomes of the process of establishing learners' starting points
 - Procedures to recognise achievement from other learning through the accreditation of prior learning (referenced to the RARPA process)
 - Records of learner feedback which show how the learner knows what his/her starting point is, and what records are kept
 - Learner induction materials
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- Examples of ILPs or other records which record the outcomes of initial assessment, the learner's starting point and the relationship between programme and individual aims and objectives
 - Processes for individual learning and assessment planning, including arrangements for review
 - Programme plans and the allocation of staff time to pre-enrolment, learner induction and review processes
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- Records of tutor feedback to learners, learner reflection, progress reviews
 - Group or individual discussions at all stages of a programme
 - Procedures for the review of individual progress and targets and for these to inform the next stages of the learning programme
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- Evidence files or portfolios
 - Records of qualifications awarded
 - Learner action plans for next steps
 - Plans that include review processes and preparation of learners for assessment, the allocation of staff time to these activities and arrangements for staff development

How can RARPA be implemented?

The most common base document for implementing RARPA is some form of individual learning plan as this usually incorporates the staged process in any case. This will need to link with the tutor records and course documentation used by the organisation. In many cases these documents and processes are already in place and need only small modifications to take account of RARPA requirements.

The supporting tutorial process also gives a context for the interaction between tutor and learner, which is essential to the effective use of the process. Recording need not be paper-based if alternative methods are more appropriate.

Although RARPA may be most easily implemented with full-time learners, it has been used successfully in a wide variety of programmes, including those for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those whose first language is not English. It can also ensure quality in programmes leading to higher-level qualifications, one-day courses and activity-based provision.

The depth to which the staged process is applied will vary with the learner's route to achievement, but all five stages need to be included to a greater or a lesser extent to ensure quality for the learner. Some stages of the process may be combined, re-visited or completed before the programme starts. In other contexts, one stage, such as the development of learning outcomes, may be completed over an extended period. It may not always be appropriate or necessary to use the term 'RARPA'.

As with any QA or QI initiative, RARPA is most successful when supported and led by management. Some organisations have found it helpful to give specific responsibility for RARPA to a senior manager.

Implementation can be managed through existing processes such as observation of teaching and learning, staff performance review, course review and evaluation, and self-assessment reports.

Although the staged process is not new, some staff may not be familiar with it and it is probably necessary to support its implementation with staff development. Training for RARPA has natural links with training related to quality improvement, such as improving observation of teaching and learning or course review, and tracking learner progress and achievement.

What support is available to implement RARPA?

A number of publications, including research and evaluation reports, are available from the LSC, the Learning and Skills Network (LSN, formerly LSDA) and the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE).

The RARPA Effective Practice Web Resource (EPWR) has a range of materials offered by RARPA practitioners as examples of effective practice in their organisations. These are

available for use by others and may be adapted. They include examples of implementing and managing RARPA across institutions, guidebooks for tutors, development workshops and ways of tracking learners' progress.

The EPWR can be accessed from the LSC RARPA web page (www.lsc.gov.uk/RARPA) then click on 'Effective Practice Web Resource' and follow the instructions.


During 2006/07 the LSC will continue to support the development of RARPA within the tests and trials of the new Framework for Achievement (FfA). This developmental activity will focus on piloting the RARPA approach within the arrangements for recognition and monitoring of awarding bodies.

The services of trainers with RARPA experience can be accessed through LSN or NIACE. It is expected that as the LSC develops the new measures of success, there will be further guidance about implementing RARPA.

Critical success factors of RARPA

Although there remain challenges for some providers, research since the pilot studies in 2003 has shown that there are no groups of learners with whom the RARPA model cannot be successfully implemented. Several factors that are key to successful implementation have been identified:

- Commitment and leadership by senior staff is essential.
- There is no 'right' way of implementing RARPA. The model should be adapted to suit the culture and systems of particular organisations.
- It is important to incorporate RARPA into existing systems rather than creating an additional layer of bureaucracy.
- It is important to convince staff of the positive benefits of RARPA for the learner. Negative staff have a negative influence on learners.
- Staff, especially those who work part-time, need support to implement RARPA. This may take the form of discrete continuing professional development. Once RARPA is incorporated into QI systems, support will come through existing activities such as teamwork, peer assessment and observation of teaching and learning.
- Imaginative ways of using resources are sometimes needed to ensure that staff take learners through the staged process effectively. Although implementing the staged process is sometimes perceived as needing more time, the key issue is to make RARPA 'fit for purpose' in the given context.
- When linked into existing cross-institutional QA and QI arrangements, RARPA can act as a catalyst for change.



The 14-19: Vocational Learning Support Programme supports the delivery and implementation of applied GCSEs, A-levels and other vocational qualifications for 14-19 year olds. It does this through high quality training, networks, support, materials and resources from practitioners, learners and others.

The 14-19: Vocational Learning Support programme is funded by the DfES and it is delivered free for all those who would benefit from its support.