



the information authority

Paper 8: Recent Developments in the
Framework for Excellence

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1. What are we asking the board to do?

This paper describes some recent developments in Version 1 of the Framework for Excellence for 2008/09 and outlines proposals for revisions to the Framework for 2009/10. The board is asked to give their views on the Version 1 changes and comment on the proposals for Version 2.

2. Background

Version 1 of the Framework for Excellence was published in June 2008¹ with a detailed description appearing in July 2008 (updated in September 2008²). Since the initial publication of Version 1, the effects of the changes to the machinery of government and the introduction of demand-led funding on the FE system have been more fully determined. There has also been a significant shift in the economic climate within England, which could have a significant impact on college and provider performance. These factors, together with a review of public-service performance-assessment frameworks in general by the National Audit Office (NAO), led to a review of the Framework in late 2008. This review led to joint proposals from DIUS and the LSC for immediate changes to Version 1 of the Framework, which received Ministerial approval in January 2009, and to proposals for revisions to Version 2 of the Framework from that being piloted currently³.

This paper summarises the changes to Version 1 of the Framework and the revised proposals for Version 2.

3. Description

3.1. Version 1

The changes to Version 1 are described below. All other parts of the Version 1 Framework remain as published. The LSC will calculate the scores and grades for the remaining indicators for each provider where appropriate. This information will be disseminated to individual providers in the form of a report with supporting information and data in May 2009.

3.1.1. Overall Performance Rating

Stakeholder consultations and independent evaluation have confirmed general support for the Framework. However, they have raised significant concerns about the validity of an Overall Performance Rating (OPR) and its relevance to the FE sector, which has improved substantially over the last few years. The case for an OPR has diminished, although this will be kept under review. Consequently, an OPR will not be calculated for Version 1 of the Framework. This means that the grades for the three Dimensions and the seven Key Performance Areas (KPAs) will also not be calculated.

¹ Framework for Excellence: Putting the Framework into Practice (LSC, June 2008)

² Framework for Excellence: Provider Guide 2008/09 (LSC, September 2008)

³ Framework for Excellence: Version 2 Pilot Guidance 2008/09 (LSC, November 2008)

3.1.2 Amount of Training

The Amount of Training performance indicator (PI) measured the volume and growth rate in employer responsive provision (apprenticeships and Train to Gain). Given the current economic climate in England, it was felt that this PI was no longer appropriate in its current form. It has been withdrawn from Version 1.

3.1.3 Use of Resources

The changes to the machinery of government and the funding regime from 2010 led to a review of the Use of Resources (UoR) PIs and their constituent measures (UoR1, UoR2, UoR3, UoR4 and UoR5). Following this review:

- UoR1 (proportion of LSC funding applied to priority provision) has been withdrawn from the Framework;
- UoR5 (capital) has been withdrawn from the Framework.

3.2 Version 2

The planned extension of the Framework to school sixth-forms from 2010 has led to a review of all aspects of the Framework. The following sections give an overview of the current proposals on the content and implementation of Version 2 of the Framework. It is possible that these may change following consultation with stakeholders, colleges and providers. A full description of Version 2 is scheduled to be published in June/July 2009.

3.2.1 Overall Performance Rating

The Framework is being piloted in school sixth-forms from the summer of 2009 with a view to introducing it across all school sixth-forms from September 2010. A Ministerial decision is awaited on whether an OPR will be re-introduced into Version 2 or some later version of the Framework to be based on published core indicators

3.2.2 Learner views

The learner views survey will be similar to that in Version 1 but will include the following developments:

- The period for completing the survey will be extended. Learners will be able to complete the survey at any time between 01 October 2009 and 12 February 2010;
- At present the learner survey is restricted to LSC-funded learners on programme when they complete the questionnaire. This may be extended to include LSC-funded learners up to one month after completing their programme provided that they were on programme during the survey period. This is being considered so that the views of more learners on short and very short programmes can be gathered;
- Work is continuing to address legal barriers to linking the Framework survey with colleges and providers own surveys.

3.2.3 Learner destinations

This is likely to be very similar to the Version 1 survey with the measure still being the achievement of a positive destination outcome. There is also now an additional requirement to identify, for each provider, the number of learners that completed an FE programme with that provider who at the time of the survey are in employment, in FE and in HE. There will continue to be no college or provider involvement in gathering the data for this PI. Colleges and providers will receive information on the destinations of their learners for planning and continual improvement purposes.

3.2.4 Employer views

This will continue to be restricted to employers with apprentices and Train to Gain learners. The robustness of employers' contact details, obtained directly from the ILR, will continue to increase. Consultation is continuing with the sector as to the extent that colleges and providers need to or would like to be involved in the gathering responses to the survey. This involvement needs to balance any workload on individual colleges and providers with the increased response rate that college and provider involvement should bring.

3.2.5 Success rates

The success rate indicator will remain the same as that for 2008/09. A revision to the success rate indicator, in which value added is taken out of the measure, will be piloted in 2009/10. A new separate indicator based on the Contextualised Value Added measure from DCSF will also be piloted in 2009/10.

3.2.6 Inspection outcomes

The Overall Effectiveness inspection grade is being withdrawn from the Framework as a PI. It will continue to be published alongside the outcomes from the Framework.

3.2.7 NEW - Achievement of full level 2 and full level 3 qualifications

This is a new PI and applies to pre-19 provision only. It measures those learners who achieve a full level 2 or full level 3 qualification as a proportion of those learners who could do so. The data comes from the existing ILR and the DCSF matched administrative datasets. There is no requirement for colleges and providers to gather additional data.

3.2.8 Financial health

The details of this PI are being reviewed in the light of the withdrawal of the capital PI from the Framework. Changes to the college finance returns may be proposed following consultation with the sector. The application of the financial health PI to the new provider types coming into scope for Version 2 is also being reviewed in the light of the outcomes from the second pilot. Financial health will no longer be published.

3.2.9 Financial management and control

The details of this PI are being reviewed in the light of the FMCE returns for Version 1. The details of the FMCE are being reconsidered. The application of the financial management and control PI to the new provider types coming

into scope for Version 2 is also being reviewed in the light of the outcomes from the second pilot. Financial management and control will no longer be published.

3.2.10 UoR1 (proportion of LSC funding applied to priority provision)

This measure has been withdrawn from the Framework.

3.2.11 UoR2 (delivery as a percentage of funding allocation or contract value)

This measure is under review for inclusion in Version 2. The details of the measure are being reviewed in the light of the outcomes from the second pilot.

3.2.12 UoR3 (LSC funding per successful outcome)

This measure is included in Version 2. The details of the measure are being reviewed in the light of the outcomes from the second pilot.

3.2.13 UoR4 (provider-level unit cost)

This measure is included in Version 2. The details of the measure are being reviewed in the light of the outcomes from the second pilot.

3.2.14 UoR5 (capital)

This PI has been withdrawn from the Framework as part of the changes to bring the Framework in-line with schools.

4. FE Sector Implications

The changes to Version 1 keep the Framework in-line with changes in external circumstances outside colleges and providers control. This maintains the integrity of the Framework while ensuring that it is flexible enough to remain fit for purpose. There is no additional burden on providers arising from these changes.

The changes proposed for Version 2 are designed to allow the extension of the Framework to school sixth-forms whilst maintaining its integrity as a single Framework across all provider types. There is no additional burden on providers arising from these changes.

5. Next Steps

The changes for Version 1 will be included in the outcomes disseminated to those colleges and providers in scope for this version. The details of Version 2 of the Framework will be circulated to the Board secretariat prior to publication. An update on these details will be presented to the Board at its next meeting.

6. Contact Details

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