



# **HOW MANAGERS CAN SUPPORT AND DEVELOP ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS – AN ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH**

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# Preface

**This guide is aimed at those who manage Advanced Practitioners (APs), or their equivalent, and builds on evidence-informed research that has been proven to make a positive difference to the professional learning and development of both individuals and teams. Theory and practice are strongly linked throughout and 'reflective questions' and 'top tips' will help you to apply some of the guide's strategies and processes to supporting the development of your APs.**

The AP role is diverse and operates in a wide range of contexts and organisations (see '[Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education](#)<sup>1</sup>'). To be effective, APs need a variety of skills and competencies to ensure they can fully support colleagues in their quest for professional excellence and to drive quality improvements in teaching, learning and assessment across provision. In addition, they need the support of middle and senior managers to be empowered to carry out that role, flexibly and effectively.

This guide is complemented by a suite of four further guides that have been produced to assist APs in their role. Each of the guides relates strongly to the [Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers in Education and Training](#) and can be used to evidence, for example, how APs and the colleagues they are supporting:

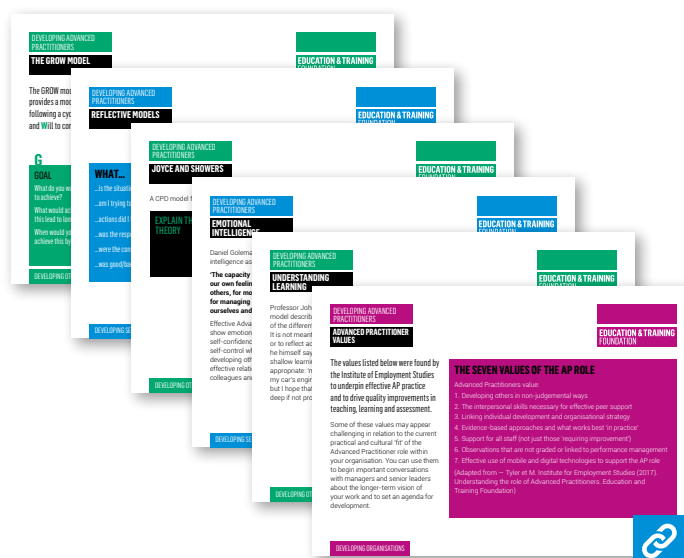
- are reflective and enquiring practitioners who think critically about their own educational assumptions, values and practices
- draw on relevant research to inform their practice.

Within each guide you will also see links to a set of [professional development cards](#). The cards are an additional, practical resource designed for APs and have been particularly valued by those new to the role. The cards can be used by APs to develop their own practice and to support their work with others. As an AP manager you may choose to model some of the approaches found within the guides and the professional development cards, such as peer-to-peer coaching and thinking rounds, when supporting and supervising APs.

## GUIDES TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF APs

GUIDE		AUTHOR
	Creating Spaces to Think in Further Education and Training	Lou Mycroft Kay Sidebottom
	Using Coaching and Mentoring to Support Colleagues: Core Principles and Techniques	Jon Thedham
	Facilitating Professional Development and High-Performance Through Situated Learning	Ian Grayling
	Coaching and Mentoring in Action: Additional Approaches, Tools and Techniques	Jon Thedham
	How Managers can Support and Develop Advanced Practitioners – an Organisational Approach	Jon Thedham

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CARDS



<sup>1</sup> Tyler et al, (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*. Education and Training Foundation

# Introduction



This guide explores a range of skills, competencies and approaches to help managers support Advanced Practitioners (APs) and maximise their impact in driving improvements in the quality of education across the organisation. The guide will be relevant for:

- senior managers
- quality managers
- staff development and learning managers
- teaching and learning improvement managers.

## AN OVERVIEW OF THIS GUIDE

**Chapter one** of the guide focuses on the rationale that underpins the implementation and shaping of the AP role, exploring the functions, values, skills and qualities they need to deliver effective support to colleagues.

**Chapter two** identifies practical ways you can develop and enable APs, both as individuals and as teams. Importantly, it provides frameworks for 'supervising' and coaching APs, supporting their development and empowering them to take the lead on driving improvements in teaching and learning.

**Chapter three** provides approaches and tools to measure the impact of the work that APs undertake and evidence a return on investment.

**Chapter four** enables you to reflect on your own skills as a manager and provides hints and tips about how to encourage and motivate your APs. This chapter includes a personal self-assessment and organisational audit tool to enable you to identify the strengths of your current AP provision and areas for development.

**Chapter five** explores ways in which you can maintain the momentum and longer term sustainability for the AP role within your organisation.

As part of the Professional Development Programme for Advanced Practitioners (2018-2019), 15 collaborative projects were funded to develop and evaluate approaches to implementing the AP role across different settings. The [case studies](#) they produced contain a rich source of practical ideas for how you might develop and implement the AP role and have been referenced throughout this guide.

<sup>2</sup> O'Leary, M. et al. (2019) *The role of leadership in prioritising and improving the quality of teaching and learning in further education*. Project report for FETL.



# Chapter 1: Shaping and recruiting to the AP role

## REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:



- If APs have been used in the past in your organisation, how was their role perceived?
- How are you currently using, or planning to use, APs across your organisation?
- How are APs being utilised to fulfil the requirements of the Education Inspection Framework (EIF)?
- How do you currently recruit, retain and support APs? How might this be enhanced?
- How clear is everyone, across the whole organisation, about the role and purpose of APs?

There are many, and varied, improvement roles in educational organisations, often leading to confusion about the responsibilities of personnel involved. This chapter sets out the initial phases of a process to ensure clarity about the AP role and its effective operation.

You will be supported to consider how you might best use APs in ways that align with your organisation's culture and its strategic and operational goals and objectives. As the AP manager, your role is critical in acting as a bridge between senior managers and the APs. Your knowledge of what is needed and what can be achieved, with the available resources, will help to secure the support of senior managers in the effective deployment of APs across the organisation.

## 1.1 HOW APs CAN BE UTILISED

Tyler et al.<sup>3</sup> researched the role and effectiveness of APs across the sector, identifying key strategic and operational factors that maximise the impact APs have on driving sustainable quality improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. Three cultures of performance management were commonly observed across the Further Education and Training sector, each impacting differently on perceptions of the AP role. These are the Deficit, Universal and Developmental Models.

## THREE MODELS FOR DEPLOYING APs

DEFICIT	UNIVERSAL	DEVELOPMENTAL
Focus on 'under-performing' teachers	All teachers need to continually develop their practice	All teachers equally need to continually develop their professional practice
Reliance on graded observation	Perceived 'under-performance' is: - regarded as a management and a development issue	Responds to identified 'issues' as a development-need rather than a management issue
Targeted continuing professional development (CPD)	- subject to some form of performance-management procedures	In this culture, peer-support and CPD does not attract negative connotations
Performance management measures		

Adapted from Tyler, E. et al. (2017) *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*.

The three models outlined above were seen by the research team as a continuum that directly correlated with the perceived degree of support for the AP role. For example, the Deficit Model was found to inhibit AP effectiveness, through its association with 'singling-out' poor performing colleagues in-line with a 'culture of blame'. At the other end of the continuum, the Development Model encouraged a highly positive and empowering view of the AP role, in which every member of staff was expected to engage in personalised professional development with the support of APs.

'We were following a 'deficit model' but through this project we were able to work towards moving from this to a 'developmental model.'

[AP, Kirklees College](#)

<sup>3</sup> Tyler et al. (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation).

As a manager of APs, you will need to work with your senior leadership team and APs to identify the current culture within your organisation and encourage an understanding of the need to change to a more supportive model where necessary. It is useful to note that the Tyler et al. research identified that coaching/mentoring interventions are most effective if the coachee/mentee volunteers to be supported.

The ratio of focus may change over time, but it is important to ensure that there is clarity for the AP to know where their priorities are, the expectations of that focus and the expected outcomes from the interventions.



### Development activity

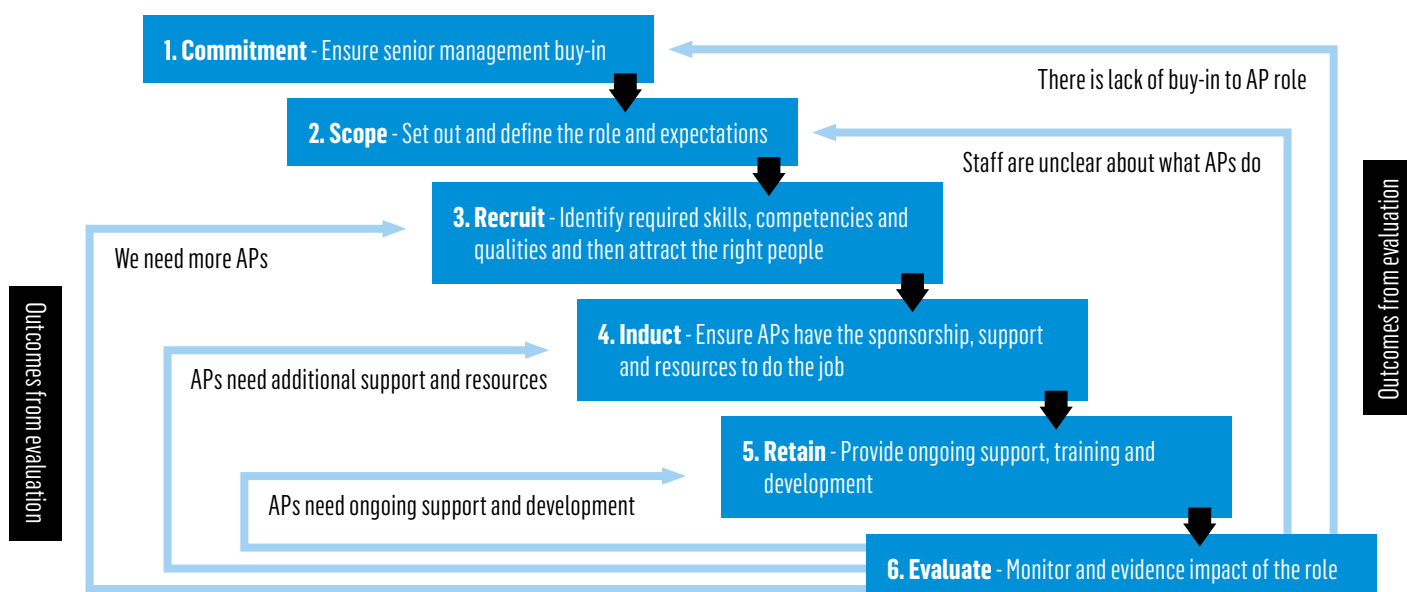
The organisation needs to be clear about the ultimate purpose of APs which may differ from the current model that is being deployed. (For example, APs may currently be used in the organisation to tackle underperformance, however, the longer-term vision may be to widen the focus of the role to foster the professional development of all practitioners.) Once the purpose has been established you can then decide which is the most appropriate AP model to use at this time.

- Using the three models as your guide (Deficit, Universal and Developmental) identify where you are now and where you would like to be in the future. What first actions will you take to either move to the new model or enhance your existing one?
- Use this thinking as a basis for a discussion with other key stakeholders including your APs, senior leaders, members of the quality team and curriculum/subject leads. It is essential that all are consulted and that they buy-in to the AP role and what it will achieve.

## 1.2 THE SIX STAGES OF AP IMPLEMENTATION

The diagram below outlines the stages that are required to shape, recruit and deploy individuals to the AP role. The following sections in this chapter set out some of the operational detail that AP managers will need to engage with and lead, in relation to the first three stages of implementation. Stages four to six will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

### THE SIX STAGES OF AP IMPLEMENTATION



<sup>4</sup> Tyler et al, (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation). Page 5

<sup>5</sup> Sinek, S. (2009), *Start With Why: How great leaders inspire everyone to take action*. London. Penguin Books.

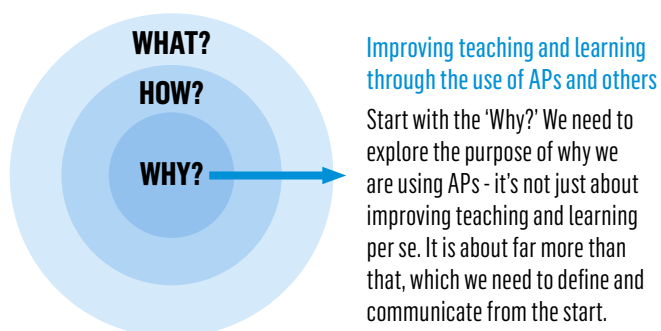
### 1.3 COMMITMENT: SETTING OUT YOUR VISION, PARAMETERS AND PRIORITIES

The first stage in the implementation process lays a foundation for the recruitment and support of APs. It requires a unified understanding of the vision for the AP role, endorsed by senior leaders and aligned to the organisation's strategic objectives. In order to do this, managers might find Simon Sinek's 'golden circle' model<sup>6</sup> helpful. The model is based on three simple questions:

1. The Why?
2. The How?
3. The What?

The model challenges traditional thinking on implementing a new process by beginning with the **'what?'** (for example, 'What are we aiming to achieve through our use of APs?') and, instead, places **'why?'** at the centre of the process.

#### THE GOLDEN CIRCLE



It is important to begin by establishing the **'why?'** For example, why are we making this change? Why are we using APs to drive quality improvements in teaching and learning? Why are we offering a collaborative, developmental approach to support the professional development of all staff? Answers to these questions will help you define the vision for the AP role and create a clear statement of intent.

Next comes the **'how?'**. For example, how will we achieve this? How will APs support individuals? How will APs work with teams? How will APs drive innovation and the sharing of practice? Answering a series of **'how?'** questions will clarify the strategic approach to be taken and the parameters within which the APs will work. Finally, the **'what?'** will help define priorities and the outcomes that are expected from the interventions undertaken by APs.

By the end of the process you should not only have a shared understanding of the purpose of APs but also a series of agreed mission and vision statements to support this.

#### Development activity

- Ask colleagues from across the organisation to identify 'why' they think APs are being used.
- Use their responses to check whether there is consistency in understanding of the purpose of the AP role. If differing views emerge consider why this might be so and implement a series of tailored activities to address this.

### SECURING WHOLE ORGANISATION 'BUY-IN' FOR YOUR APs AND OTHER COLLEAGUES

Knoster, Villa and Thousand's work<sup>6</sup> on the key factors that underpin successful change provides AP managers with another useful tool for securing organisational commitment to the AP role. They identified a number of elements that need to be present to secure 'buy-in' and enact change (see model below). Conversely, if any of these elements are missing (indicated by a '?' in the model), the change process will be undermined in the ways indicated on the right of the model.

#### CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

		Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	Plan	= Sustainable Change
?	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	Plan	= Confusion
Vision	+	?	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	Plan	= Anxiety
Vision	+	Skills	+	?	+	Resources	+	Plan	= Resistance
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	?	+	Plan	= Frustration
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	?	= Treadmill

Vision:	The 'Why are we doing this?' to combat confusion
Skills:	The skill sets needed to combat anxiety
Incentives:	Reasons, perks, advantages to combat resistance
Resources:	Tools and time needed to combat frustration
Plan:	Provides the direction to eliminate the treadmill effect

Whilst the **'why?'** (the vision) is the foundation you also need the **'how?'** (skills, incentives and resources) and the **'what?'** (the plan) to ensure successful implementation.

<sup>6</sup> Knoster, T., Villa, R., and Thousand, J. (2000). *A framework for thinking about systems change*. In R. Villa & J. Thousand (Eds.), *Restructuring for caring and effective education: Piecing the puzzle together* (pp. 93-128). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

**Development activity**

Use the Knoster, Villa and Thousand model to evaluate your current plan for the implementation of APs (alternatively use it to inform your thinking if you are in the initial stages of development).

- How many of the five elements are you confident that you have in place?
- Which do you think need strengthening?
- What are your priorities for development?
- What will help you to move forward?

How might you use the model to frame a dialogue with APs, colleagues and senior managers to obtain their active commitment to addressing each of the five elements?

## 1.4 SCOPE: SETTING OUT THE AP ROLE

Tyler et al.<sup>7</sup> undertook the first detailed research activity on the implementation of APs across the sector. Their conclusions include the following recommendations:

- the AP role is sustainable and most effective when it is an integral part of the wider improvement team and not just a stand-alone function
- the role needs to be underpinned by a clear job specification detailing the nature of the experience and personal skills and attributes that make effective APs
- AP support should be as accessible as possible and clearly separated from management structures and responsibilities if APs are to be fully embraced
- the needs of the sector change with each new intake and it is crucial that AP roles are not allowed to stagnate. One of their most powerful strengths is the flexibility and responsiveness of the role
- regular reviews of the role with input from key stakeholders on an annual basis (at minimum) are highly valuable
- support packages delivered by APs are most effective when they are flexible to the needs, interests and time pressures of staff receiving support. Making use of a range of methods such as 'taster' and more in-depth group CPD, informal chats, peer observations and longer-term mentoring helps to ensure that staff can access the support that suits them best
- the AP role works most effectively when teaching staff are encouraged to take autonomous ownership of their own development.

Timetable remittance is often described by APs as the most important factor that enables them to physically be able to do the role. If there is too little time, interventions become piecemeal and have to stop before real change is realised. Tyler et al. noted in their research that the level of remittance varied between organisations from two hours per week to 0.5 full-time equivalent, depending on caseload size (e.g. the number of teaching staff the AP is supporting) and travel time required to reach staff (e.g. visiting apprenticeship assessors).

**Development activity**

How should APs be deployed in your organisation? Use the following questions as prompts to help you identify their possible primary and secondary functions.

Should you see APs as:

- individual and team coaches and mentors?
- trainers and teachers?
- researchers identifying good practice and new ideas (both internal and external) to share amongst colleagues?
- project leaders?
- critical friends?
- monitors and improvers of quality?
- motivators?
- challengers - challenging existing thinking and practice?
- change agents?
- ...other functions not covered above?

## AP FUNCTIONS AND VALUES

Based on the Tyler et al. research, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF)'s Professional Development Programme for Advanced Practitioners distilled six functions and seven values underpinning AP effectiveness. These functions and values can help you define what you will be looking for when recruiting APs. They can also help to identify continuing development needs for APs, individually or collectively, and focus their priorities for supporting colleagues. APs are able to access a ['toolkit'](#) of resources which includes these functions and values (see page 9).

<sup>7</sup> Tyler et al. (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation).



DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS  
ADVANCED PRACTITIONER FUNCTIONS

EDUCATION & TRAINING FOUNDATION

Based on research conducted by the Institute of Employment Studies (See Tyler et al (2017) Understanding the role of Advanced Practitioners) we have created six role descriptors and seven values that underpin the work of effective Advanced Practitioners.

You can use these functions to evaluate your current role and to set targets for extending your reach and impact.

DEVELOPING ORGANISATIONS

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS  
ADVANCED PRACTITIONER FUNCTIONS

EDUCATION & TRAINING FOUNDATION

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS  
ADVANCED PRACTITIONER VALUES

EDUCATION & TRAINING FOUNDATION

The values listed below were found by the Institute of Employment Studies to underpin effective AP practice and to drive quality improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.

Some of these values may appear challenging in relation to the current practical and cultural 'fit' of the Advanced Practitioner role within your organisation. You can use them to begin important conversations with managers and senior leaders about the longer-term vision of your work and to set an agenda for development.

DEVELOPING ORGANISATIONS

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS  
ADVANCED PRACTITIONER VALUES

EDUCATION & TRAINING FOUNDATION

The AP role and functions may develop over time. At this early stage of implementation, you will need to be promoting these functions and values throughout your organisation.

Lack of role clarification can lead to APs being 'ascribed' a series of potentially incompatible and/or conflicting roles by both managers and staff. For example, the AP sees their role as improving teaching and learning, through feedback, and the sharing of good practice across the whole organisation. Whereas the senior management team see the role of the AP as helping the organisation to reach an Ofsted 'outstanding' in teaching and learning through working with underperforming colleagues.

## Development activity

Use the following questions to help clarify the AP job role and function:

- What support do we want APs to provide to both teams and individuals?
- How will we enable them to work with staff?
- How much time do we expect APs to dedicate to the role and how will we resource this?
- How will they be managed and supervised?
- Do we want APs to be subject specialists or generalists?
  - Review this [case study](#) from South Devon College and Bridgwater & Taunton College in which the partnership explore how they could use the role of the AP to address the challenge of increasing learner attendance, achievement and satisfaction when taking GCSE and Functional Skills Maths and English qualifications.
- What personal and interpersonal skills do we want them to have?
- Do we need APs to have both coaching and mentoring skills?
- What involvement will we need them to have in: change management; quality improvement and quality assurance?
- Where do we want APs to sit in the organisation's structure?

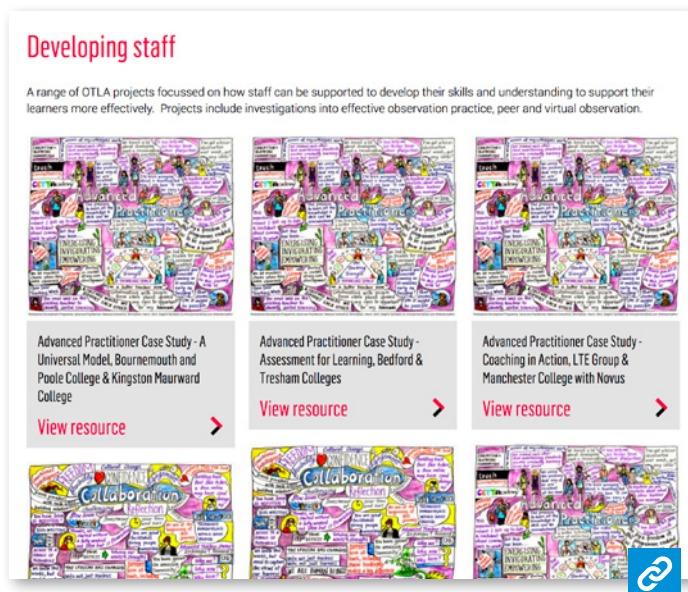
## 1.5 SCOPE: HARNESSING LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

As part of the Professional Development Programme for Advanced Practitioners (2018-2019), 15 collaborative projects were funded to develop and evaluate approaches to implementing the AP role across different settings. The case studies they produced contain a rich source of practical ideas which could further inform thinking about how you might scope the AP role. For example, how might you:

- use APs to deliver a developmental model of support to staff? (See case studies produced by Bournemouth and Poole, Bedford and Tresham, North Lyndsey, Bolton and Hopwood Hall)
- use coaching to facilitate change? (See case studies produced by WEA, East Surrey and Manchester College)
- build the capacity of APs to develop relevant CPD and support the induction of new staff? (See case studies produced by WEA, Kirklees, Westminster Kingsway/Stanmore, Myerscough and Bournemouth and Poole)

- support staff ownership of teaching and learning improvements through the use of approaches such as 'Teaching Triangles'? (see case studies produced by East Riding, Westminster Kingsway/Stanmore and LTE Group & Manchester with Novus.)

All of the case studies can be found at: <https://improving-teaching.excellencegateway.org.uk/assessment-and-development/developing-staff>



## TOP TIPS



- Use existing research findings and case studies to help inform/confirm your thinking about the AP role and its purpose
- Agree with all stakeholders where the AP role sits in the organisation
- Define key deliverables, responsibilities and the authority the AP will have to initiate and implement improvements
- Establish organisational and team goals and objectives for the role of AP
- Set out essential and desirable traits and qualities that you want APs to demonstrate
- Gain agreement from the senior leadership team as to available incentives to support the role
- Plan your communication strategy to ensure universal understanding of the AP role.

## 1.6 RECRUITING APs: WHAT SKILLS AND QUALITIES ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

'Effective APs are confident and excel in teaching practice, they have the ability to coach and mentor others, they have excellent interpersonal and communication skills and they have an understanding of change management, quality improvement and quality assurance.'<sup>8</sup>

Stage three of the AP implementation model focuses on recruiting to the role. Most organisations formally recruit to the role even if the incentives for the AP will largely be intrinsic rather than extrinsic.

A number of recent papers surrounding the role of an AP, or equivalent, have cited the need for such individuals to be experts in their fields.<sup>9</sup> However, Stephen Brookfield in his work on critical reflection, identifies that in many cases, colleagues who have sometimes struggled to become expert teachers are often the best APs. They have experienced what it is like to develop and refine their skills over time and recognise that becoming an expert is challenging and requires both support and reflection.

Potential APs should ideally be emotionally intelligent and self-aware. They should have the ability to manage their emotions and recognise the emotions of others. These foundations will be a great help in building effective working relationships with colleagues.

'It's good to know that I now have an encouraging and supportive colleague that I can turn to. I have so enjoyed discussing ideas and sharing tips in such a collaborative way – what a resource APs are!'

[Tutors, Bournemouth and Poole College](#)

<sup>8</sup> Tyler et al, (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation). Page 5

<sup>9</sup> Brookfield S.D., (2017) *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. Second Edition. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.

## THE EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT AP

	PERSONAL OWN EMOTIONS	SOCIAL OTHERS' EMOTIONS
RECOGNITION - KNOWING	APs know themselves, their strengths and their developments.	APs are empathetic, without being sympathetic. They can understand and at the same time challenge.
REGULATION - MANAGING	APs manage themselves in that they recognise how their emotions and strengths and weaknesses can either help or impeded their role.	APs build effective working relationships with all the colleagues they interact with.

Tyler et al.<sup>10</sup> highlighted some additional skills that effective APs possess which you might find useful to consider. These included being:

- a good listener
- an effective motivator
- inspiringly persuasive or influential
- realistic and practical
- open-minded
- approachable
- patient, understanding and considerate
- people-oriented
- supportive
- an achiever
- respected.

### Development activities

Use the emotional intelligence matrix above to identify questions and assessment activities you could apply when selecting new APs.

Take a look at WEA's [AP role descriptor and application process](#). How might you adapt/harness some of their ideas?

This first chapter has focused on three key elements you need to consider when implementing APs – securing commitment and buy-in, scoping and then recruiting to the role. In chapter two we explore how as a manager you can develop and support your APs, thereby inducting them effectively into the team. In chapter three we then explore ways to sustain the AP role through assessment of their impact.

## FURTHER RESOURCES



Tyler, E., et al. (2017) *Understanding the role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, Institute for Employment Studies Report.

Powell, D and Jones S. (2019) *Using 'teacher talk' to reimagine FE-based research as a basis for teaching, learning and assessment*. Report from the Research and Scholarly Activity working Group.

Cooper, C., Flint-Taylor, J., and Pearn, M. (2013) *Building Resilience for Success*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

Brookfield, S. D. (2017) *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*: Second Edition. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

## WEBLINKS

O'Leary, M., et al. (2019) *The Role of Leadership in Prioritising and Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning in Further Education*. [FETL Working Paper](#).

Hobson, A.J. et al. (2015). *Mentoring and Coaching for Teachers in the Further Education and Skills Sector in England*. [Full report](#). Gatsby Foundation.

ETF have funded the development of a range of [OTLA action research projects](#).

Useful research working papers to help managers and APs reflect on current theory and practice can be found [here](#).

<sup>10</sup> Tyler et al. (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation).

## Chapter 2: Developing and enabling APs

### REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:



- How does the AP role align with the wider quality improvement, supervision and appraisal processes in your organisation?
- How much autonomy do APs and their colleagues have to identify and implement improvements?
- How do you ensure consistency in the quality of AP interventions across the organisation?
- How do you actively develop and support your APs?

This chapter explores the skills, competencies and approaches required to develop APs as individuals, as well as teams. Section 2.4 will then identify some practical approaches that you as a manager can deploy to enable APs to access and support staff. The chapter draws on research, including the 2019 Further Education Trust for Leadership (FETL) report '[The role of leadership in prioritising and improving the quality of teaching and learning in further education](#)',<sup>11</sup> to suggest ways in which you can supervise and support APs. It also acknowledges and addresses some of the challenges of managing the 'cross-cutting' nature of the AP role, providing some 'top tips' drawn from the work of APs and collaborative project teams who participated in the ETF's Professional Development Programme for Advanced Practitioners.

'In terms of capability, a supportive framework was agreed with the Lead Managers that allowed the APs to work outside their regular roles and remit to focus on the delivery of this project.'

[Project Lead, East Surrey College, East Surrey](#)

### 2.1 SUPERVISION AND APPRAISAL OF APs

Continuous professional development is critical to growing and enhancing the confidence and skills of APs. As a manager you can assist this process by facilitating 'coaching supervision'. You can provide time and space either in a 1:1 or group setting for APs to share, in confidence, their case load of activity so that

they can gain insight, support and direction that will enable them to better work with colleagues. The two AP coaching guides, '[Using coaching and mentoring to support colleagues](#)' and '[Coaching and mentoring in action](#)' identify useful ways that APs can do this, with your help.

Some organisations contract external coaches to provide supervision to AP teams, alternatively you might want to do this yourself. Two possible models that you might want to experiment with are outlined below.

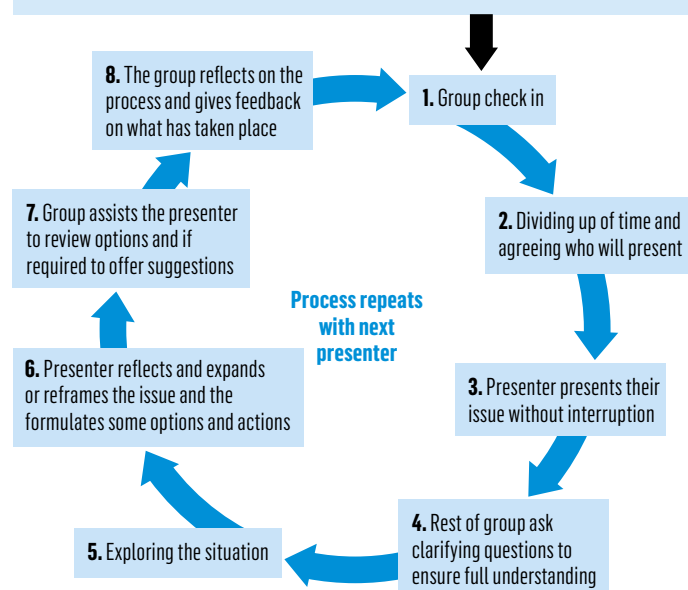
#### ACTION LEARNING SUPERVISION FOR APs

[Action Learning Sets](#) have been used in the development of APs, learning coaches, teachers and managers across the sector. They have also been identified as a useful tool when supervising groups of coaches, because they are both cost effective and straightforward to facilitate.

Action learning supervision builds on the protocols used in action learning sets. The approach has a series of stages and rules that are easy to follow and that can produce real, reflective and developmental results.

#### SUPERVISION USING ACTION LEARNING

**Stage one:** The group check-in involves establishing parameters. These include: bringing real problems, questions and issues to the group; openness (including willingness to share mistakes); taking personal responsibility for own development and giving equal attention to others' issues and learning.



<sup>11</sup> O'Leary, M. et al.(2019) *The role of leadership in prioritising and improving the quality of teaching and learning in further education*. Project report for FETL.



If you have a team of APs you can arrange for an action learning supervision meeting once or twice a term, depending on the number of interventions the APs are making. In turn, you will be modelling practice that APs can then use when working with and developing teams.<sup>12</sup>

## THE GROUP MODEL FOR AP TEAM COACHING AND SUPERVISION

Another approach to supervision that you may choose to facilitate is the GROUP model of coaching. GROUP coaching can be completed in one meeting or over a sequence of meetings. It can also take place face-to-face or, if your teams work over several sites, through the use of video conferencing. The process enables APs to work together in pairs or groups to problem solve, which in turn, helps them to develop a deeper team identity and to remain focused and motivated.

The framework, below, will be familiar to many APs as it is based on the [GROW model](#) of coaching developed by John Whitmore.<sup>13</sup>

## RE-GROUP: THE REVIEW AND EVALUATE PHASE

The development and refinement of ideas continues in subsequent GROUP coaching sessions but follow a process of RE-GROUP (Review, Evaluate, Goal, Reality, Options, Understand others, Perform). The actions taken from the previous coaching session are systematically reviewed and evaluated before new goals are established or adapted.<sup>14</sup>

## 2.2 ENSURING CONSISTENCY: TARGET SETTING

'APs have helped me get better at SMART targets.'

[Teaching Staff, North Lindsey College and Doncaster College](#)

Having clarified a shared vision and an overarching strategy for the implementation of APs (chapter one), you will need to fully implement the strategy

Teams	Teams	Individuals
<b>Goal</b>	Ask AP team what they want to achieve from each session, this determines the focus of coaching.	What do you want to achieve this session? How would you like to feel afterwards? What would be the best use of this time?
<b>Reality</b>	Explore how the current situation is impacting the AP team's ability to achieve their goals and objectives.	How have things gone in the past week/month? How have you handled any problems? What worked? What didn't work?
<b>Options</b>	As an AP team and with your facilitation, identify and assess available options. Encourage solution focused thinking and new ideas.	What possible options do you have? What has worked for you in the past? What haven't you tried yet that might work?
<b>Understand others</b>	The AP team observes deeply, notices their internal responses to what is being said and makes meaning both of what they hear and their internal response. The team connects to the emerging best future.	What is your view on the best options? What did you understand from listening to others' views? What was your internal dialogue when you were listening to colleagues? How can you integrate the broader group perspective?
<b>Perform</b>	As their manager assist the AP team to determine next steps. Explore best options. Develop individual and team action plans. Build motivation and ensure accountability.	What is the most important thing to do next? What can be learnt from this exploration of options? What might get in the way? Who will be able to support you? How will you feel when this is done?

<sup>12</sup> Childs, R., et al. (2011) *Supervision in Coaching – Supervision ethics and continuous professional development* (edited by Passmore, J.) London: Kogan Page.

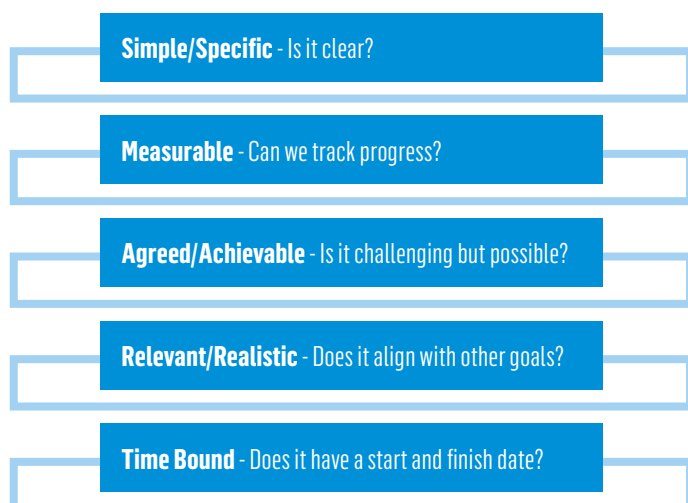
<sup>13</sup> Whitmore, J. (2017) *Coaching for Performance: The principles and practice of coaching and leadership*. 5th Edition. London: Nicholas Brearley.

<sup>14</sup> Brown, S. W., and Grant, A. M. (2010) From GROW to GROUP. Theoretical issues and a practical model for group coaching in organisations. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*. Vol. 3, No. 1, March 30-45

providing clear goals and targets that APs will be expected to achieve. Whilst the broad goal may be to improve teaching and learning or the performance of colleagues, this needs to be translated into targets that you as a manager can evaluate and use to assess the effectiveness of the actions and interventions that each AP undertakes. Many APs will be working to a curriculum manager for their teaching role and to you as the AP manager for their AP role. It will therefore be essential to be aware of workload and time constraints when setting targets.

A traditional approach used in target and objective setting is to use the acronym SMART. This ensures that achievement of the desired target can be recognised. It also helps establish 'milestones' (sub-targets along the way).

### SMART TARGETS



#### Development activity

Identify the goals and targets you and others have set for APs. Review them against the following questions and identify where they can be improved by making them 'smarter'.

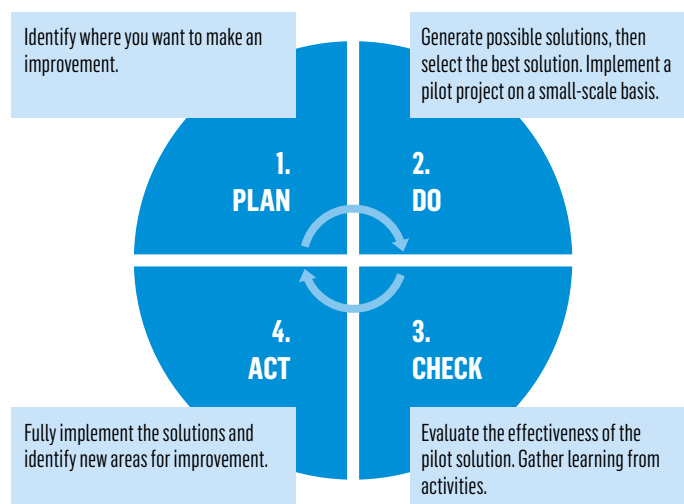
- Do all our APs have clear targets that meet the SMART test?
- Do they have the skills to successfully achieve those targets?
- Do they have the support and the resources to achieve those targets?
- What is the incentive to achieve the targets?
- How do we/will we log, track and review those targets?

## 2.3 THINK BIG, START SMALL

It is important that when planning improvement activities, managers and APs understand the value of testing out new ideas and approaches as small pilots before scaling-up across teams or curriculum areas. This avoids 'quick fixes' and supports reliable decision making, leading to more sustainable solutions. For example, APs can pilot small scale teaching and learning projects with a few teams before considering a whole organisation roll out or pilot some new coaching activities in a few 1:1 coaching sessions, gathering coachee feedback to review the process before implementing more widely.

One approach that can help you to test ideas is Deming's 'Plan, Do, Study, Act' cycle<sup>15</sup> which is often referred to as the Deming Cycle. This is an iterative process of quality improvement and experiential learning that enables you to test any idea or potential solution through progressive cycles, gathering evidence of what will work. This means that by the time you roll the process or intervention out more widely many of the operational issues will have been alleviated.

### PLAN - DO - CHECK - ACT



<sup>15</sup> Tague, N.R. (2005). "Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle". *The quality toolbox* (2nd ed.). Milwaukee: ASQ Quality Press. pp. 390–392.

## 2.4 MANAGING THE TENSIONS

Tensions can arise in work-based coaching relationships between the AP and the person they are working with (known as the coachee) and the coachee's line manager. You can help APs to mitigate these tensions wherever and whenever possible by, for example:

- ensuring that all parties are clear about the boundaries involved with the coaching process, including confidentiality, and that contracting between the AP and their coachee takes place before the start of any support as set out in the AP coaching guide, '[Coaching and Mentoring in Action](#)'
- encouraging line managers to contribute to shaping the overall goals of the coaching sessions whilst respecting the confidentiality of what is discussed in the sessions themselves
- asking line managers to support the coaching process and to take an active role in helping coachees transfer their learning effectively to their practice and to other team members.

Another tension that often occurs is when the AP is managed by more than one individual (for example, you as the manager of APs and their curriculum manager). You may also be called upon to reduce tensions with a coachee's manager when the AP's support for the coachee conflicts with the demands on the coachee's time, especially if priorities diverge.

Possible solutions that you can provide include:

- taking a whole organisation approach by talking to all managers about the AP role demonstrating how planned interventions will help them to achieve their goals and targets, then following this up with individual conversations as requested by APs
- providing positive examples, stories and role models of how the AP has made a real impact on individuals and teams
- negotiating in a collaborative way to ensure that the AP is not put under undue pressure and that all are aware of the time constraints and other commitments each AP has in the organisation.

## ENABLING APs TO ACCESS AND SUPPORT STAFF

'We found that we needed to overcome challenges regarding timetabling, so next time we plan to draw on the expertise of our college timetabler to help us to plan the Open Door week more effectively.'

[AP, Kingston Maurward College](#)

Tyler et al.'s<sup>16</sup> research, supported by the findings from the collaborative projects, identified that many APs struggle to gain access to colleagues in order to work with them. This is often due to fundamental issues such as time and timetabling. There are a number of enabling strategies and approaches that you could facilitate as a manager to help APs to overcome this. For example, you could:

- work with senior colleagues to secure designated time for key AP activities such as introducing 'sharing of practice' slots on the timetable, ring-fencing AP led sessions on staff development days
- suggest APs teach groups to release practitioners to carry out peer reviews
- support APs to deliver and record a series of short micro-teaching sessions for staff to view at a time that is convenient to them
- encourage curriculum managers to enable APs to input into team meetings or support team development sessions
- enable APs to co-plan and co-teach sessions with colleagues
- support APs to develop tailored resources that meet the specific requirements of individuals and teams.

<sup>16</sup> Tyler, E. et al. (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation).

## 2.5 EMPOWERING APs

'Teachers are the staff who, with support [of APs], identify the issues, attempt to address them, then make the changes. Teachers need to be released to lead in this area of activity. Managers have to concentrate on establishing the conditions in which this can take place.'<sup>17</sup>

O'Leary's research into the role of leadership in improving teaching and learning identifies the importance of empowering those who teach to take responsibility for their own development. The AP role is critical here and APs need your clear authority to work in this way. O'Leary has identified the importance of managers providing 'structured autonomy' – giving responsibility for teaching and learning improvements to the teachers and the APs that are supporting them as part of a long-term structured process that 'unfolds incrementally'.

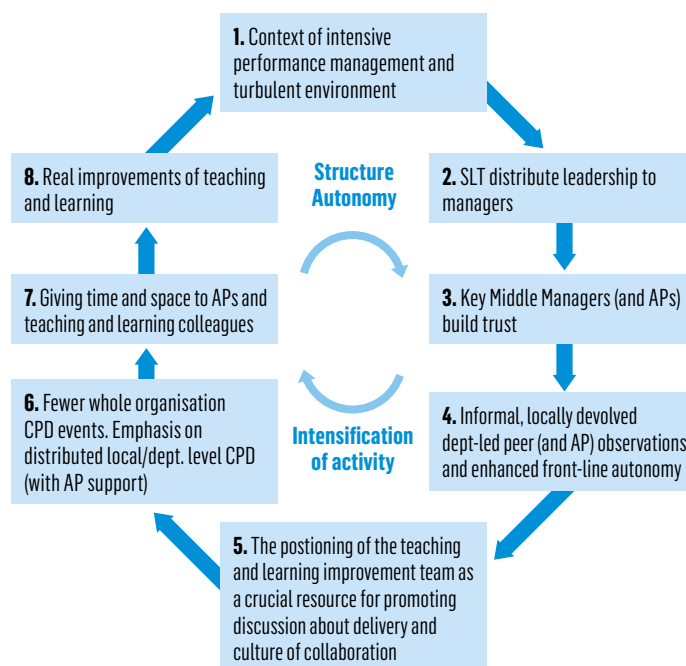
Critically, the research identifies the need for cross-organisation, 'collaborative interaction' which requires adequate time for APs and teachers/trainers to, 'share thoughts and reflection on their practice.' For this to be achieved, the research stresses the need for organisations to devolve leadership and loosen control. O'Leary et al.'s proposed model for achieving this, in part, replicates Kotter's recent work on '[Survive](#)' and '[Thrive](#)'<sup>18</sup> organisations where 'Survive' organisations are 'threat focused' and resort to bureaucracy and red tape. Whereas the 'Thrive' organisations are opportunity focused and look for creative and energising ways to fulfil those opportunities.

The teacher-led quality improvement model, proposed by O'Leary et al. is what Peters and Waterman<sup>19</sup> called 'tight-loose', in that it is tight on priorities and parameters that recognise the context the organisation is operating in but is loose in empowering and supporting teachers/trainers and their managers to take action. Distributed leadership and management provide the resources and autonomy to drive continuous improvements in teaching and learning.

'Leaders have trusted APs to work with their Head of Area to deliver the appropriate teaching, learning and assessment support for each area.'

[Head of Teaching and Learning, Shipley College](#)

## DISTRIBUTIVE TEACHER-LED MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT



<sup>17</sup> O'Leary, M. et al.(2019) *The role of leadership in prioritising and improving the quality of teaching and learning in further education*. Project report for FETL.

<sup>18</sup> Kotter, J. (2019) *Survive and Thrive*. Available at: <https://www.kotterinc.com/research-and-perspectives/survive-thrive/> (Accessed: 4th September 2019)

<sup>19</sup> Peters, T.J., and Waterman R.H. *In Search of Excellence*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1982



## TOP TIPS



- Consider what kind of ongoing professional development APs will need over time – e.g. advanced coaching skills; change management approaches; project management skills; how to run action research cycles; different types of digital and mobile technology training.
- If you have a team of APs, facilitate time for them to meet as a group to plan, share practice and coach each other. This will help to develop their confidence and identity as well as to ensure consistency in the role.
- Build effective professional collaborations both internally and externally (online and face to face), using processes such as action learning sets and professional exchanges.
- Support critical thinking and the thinking culture by exploring, for example, Nancy Kline's 10 components of the Thinking Environment, to facilitate professional, developmental conversations. Examples and tools for this can be found in the '[Creating Spaces to Think in Further Education and Training Guide](#).'
- Use research and evidence-informed practice to support the ongoing professional development of APs and staff (building on strengths and the positives).

## FURTHER RESOURCES



Brown, S.W., and Grant, A.M. (2010) *From GROW to GROUP. Theoretical issues and a practical model for group coaching in organisations*. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*. Vol. 3, No. 1, March 30-45

O'Leary, M., et al. (2019) *The role of leadership in prioritising and improving the quality of teaching and learning in further education*. Project report for FETL.

Childs, R., et al. (2011) *Supervision in Coaching: Supervision ethics and continuous professional development* (edited by Passmore, J.) Kogan Page. London.

## WEBLINKS

ETF Research Portal: <https://research.excellencegateway.org.uk/>

Lawrence, P., and Whyte, A., (2014) [What is coaching supervision and why is it so important?](#) *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*.

Clutterbuck, D. (2011) [The Spectrum of Coaching Supervision](#).

Clutterbuck, D. (2015) [Supervising Team Coaches](#).

Hawkins, P., Turner, D and Passmore, J. [The Manifesto for Supervision \(2019\)](#).

Moen, R.D., and Norman C.L. [Circling Back: Clearing Up Myths About The Deming Cycle and Seeing How It Keeps Evolving](#).

FETL Publications: <https://fetl.org.uk/works/publications/>

Mycroft, L., and Sidebottom, K. [Creating Spaces to Think in Further Education and Training](#).

Grayling I., Facilitating Professional development and High Performance Through Situated Learning. <https://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/content/etf2874>

Kotter (2019) [Charting the course – the path to transformation in education](#).

## Chapter 3: Measuring the impact of APs

### REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:



- How do you currently know whether your APs are having a real and sustainable impact?
- How can you ensure that everyone in the organisation recognises the value that APs are contributing to the improvement of teaching, learning and assessment?
- How effective are the baseline measures that you have in place from which you can evidence the difference that APs are making?
- What do you currently use to record both hard and soft and long- and short-term measures of impact?
- Which measure/s do you think are most important when assessing the impact of APs?

This chapter will support you in your management role to identify the impact that AP interventions have on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Evaluation of that impact starts with a collective reflection on the following three questions.

1. What do the teachers and trainers expect to gain from the support of an AP? How will we know at the end of the support if these benefits are realised?
2. What does the organisation expect to gain from the use of APs? How will we know at the end of support interventions if these benefits are realised?
3. What internal and external processes need to be in place to enable the APs to deliver the changes expected? How will we know if they are working in time to change them if they are not?

### 3.1 EVALUATION OF AP ACTIVITY

The Tyler et al. report identified that the tracking, monitoring and measuring of AP outcomes was inconsistent across the sector. This was often due to difficulties in gathering hard, quantitative data and then having to rely on anecdotal or informal feedback. APs were, however, able to achieve 'soft' outcomes such as: improved self-efficacy, confidence, self-belief,

engagement and motivation and teachers' and trainers' positive perceptions of improved professional practice. Tyler et al. also found that the role led to improved professional practice in the APs themselves and to a change in organisational culture defined as a, 'more supportive environment with an emphasis on shared practice.'<sup>20</sup>

Where organisations involved in the research did use quantitative data to evaluate impact, they used traditional 'hard indicators' including: attendance, retention and engagement as well as inserting questions in qualitative staff and learner surveys to support findings. The inspection framework, now the Inspection Education Framework (IEF)<sup>21</sup>, provided another quantitative and qualitative marker which was used by some to identify longer-term improvements (or short-term improvements, if the organisation was engaged in an intervention). Some organisations were also starting to look for impacts that demonstrated a clear return on their investment in relation to time, resources and money.

### 3.2 RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Measuring a raw return on investment is not easy in the context of teaching and learning improvement. There are a number of variables that impact on overall success as well as a range of outcomes that are not easily measured. In the next section we will look at how you might tackle some of these. Fundamentally for you, as a manager of APs, it will be important to demonstrate that APs are really providing value. Whilst not being constrained by just a financial return on investment it may be helpful to look at a range of returns that warrant the investment being made. Similarly, it is important that you recognise the overall cost of the interventions in terms of resourcing which includes time and money.

### SIX STEPS TO MEASURE AP RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**Step 1:** Agree the organisational strategy for teaching and learning improvement and identify any current and future critical issues – identify the costs, monetary and non-monetary, of potential actions (both doing and not doing them).

<sup>20</sup> Tyler, E. et al. (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation).

<sup>21</sup> Ofsted (2019) *The Education Inspection Framework*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework> (Accessed: 4th September 2019).

**Step 2:** Align the activities of the APs to address the most important improvement goals, ensuring that you have enough resources to do this. Then agree desired results, objectives and specific measures of success.

**Step 3:** Build evaluation methodology (see section 3.3 for more information) into the activities of APs at the outset and integrate this with existing quality improvement and HR processes to help keep things clear and simple.

**Step 4:** Create shared ownership of the evaluation of APs by engaging evaluators from many levels and functions within your organisation (e.g. quality team, curriculum managers, senior managers, teaching and learning colleagues, support teams and learners).

**Step 5:** Manage perceptions and expectations, provide best practice examples, and communicate quick wins.

**Step 6:** Hold on to the strategic bigger picture and intent throughout. When you identify the tangible and intangible value APs add to your organisation then you can present a strong business case for their continued use.

'The project has highlighted to our senior leadership team the real potential of the AP role to drive the quality of teaching learning and assessment across the organisation.'

[Bournemouth and Poole and Kingston Maurward College](#)

## OFSTED: THE EDUCATION INSPECTION FRAMEWORK (EIF) – A MEANS FOR EVIDENCING THE VALUE OF APs

The 2019 EIF<sup>22</sup> refocuses inspections on teaching and learning and this brings with it increasing requirements for the skills and talents of APs and the colleagues who manage them. This focus on teaching and learning will mean that all those involved in the development and wellbeing of colleagues and learners, such as APs, are likely to be critical to the overall assessment of the organisation's effectiveness and performance.

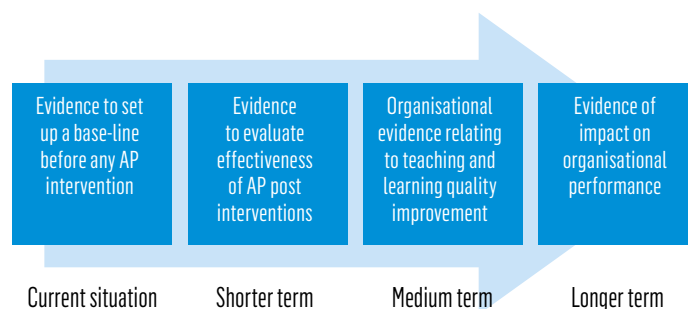
The framework looks at three areas of the organisation's activity: Intent, Implementation and Impact. The AP role can support and enhance all of these areas contributing to the organisation's thinking, planning and practice around the curriculum. In addition the role can help the organisation to evidence effectiveness by:

- demonstrating the focus on the education and training provided
- providing evidence of continuing professional development for teachers, trainers and other staff and its impact
- ensuring learners benefit from effective teaching
- providing feedback and ongoing assessment of the workload of staff
- ensuring a consistent approach to setting high ambitions and expectations for all learners.

## 3.3 IDENTIFYING WHAT AND WHEN TO EVALUATE

You need to determine which evidence indicators could and should be used at the different stages of an AP intervention, and beyond. For example, at the beginning of an AP intervention, to provide a baseline, and at the end of an intervention to capture progress made.

### WHAT TO EVALUATE AND WHEN



<sup>22</sup> Ofsted (2019) *The Education Inspection Framework*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework> (Accessed: 4th September 2019).

**Development activity**

Use the following questions at the outset when you are planning an AP intervention to help you establish what you need to evaluate in both the long- and short-term. You can also use the questions to help you regularly review the effectiveness of the impact measures you have introduced.

- What changes in attitude, behaviour, skills or performance do we want to see as a result of the AP's interventions?
- How can we establish what changes have occurred in practice? (This implies a concept of a current baseline.)
- Which measures of impact are practical, appropriate and meaningful?
- What will the role of managers be in supporting and tracking the AP's interventions?
- What are our expectations for short-, medium- and long-term impacts of the AP's support?
- How will we fully embed the improvements into ongoing good practice?
- How could the APs support this follow-up process?
- How much budget do we need to dedicate to planning the implementation process and outcomes tracking?

Questions adapted from: Joanne Miles (2016)<sup>23</sup>

### 3.4 EVALUATION INDICATORS USED AT DIFFERENT STAGES

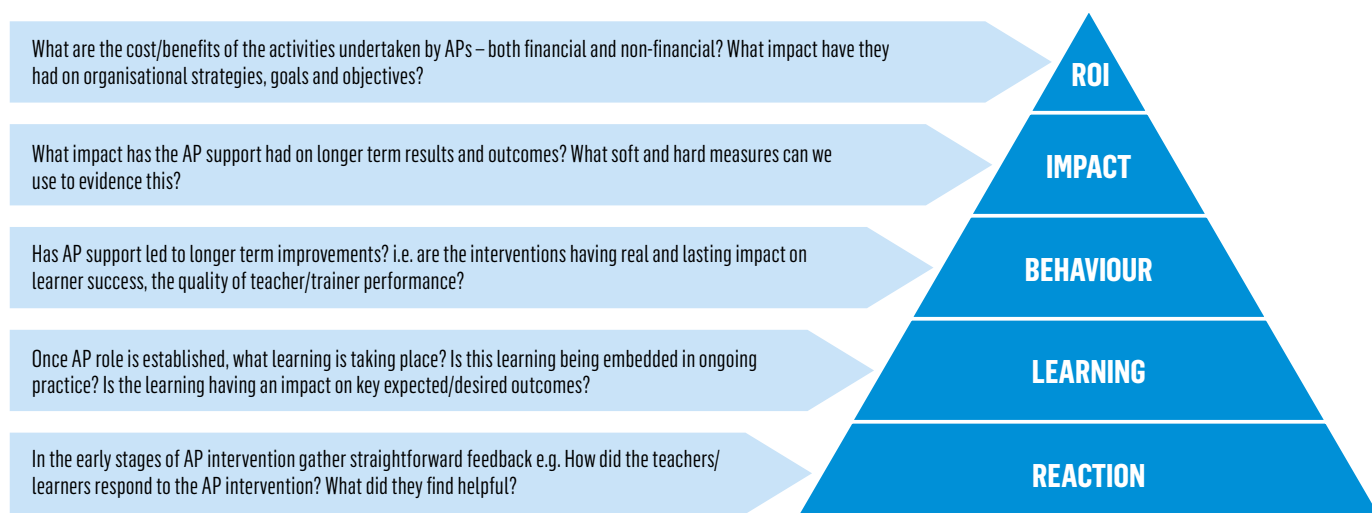
In the planning stage you need to establish a baseline set of hard and soft data through which you can measure value added and distance travelled. These initial benchmarks could include: the current quality of teaching and learning, learner engagement, attendance, learner satisfaction, staff satisfaction; self-assessment of teaching and learning; feedback on performance (e.g. quality walks, observations of teaching and learning, reports from the quality team).

As the work of APs progresses, you will need measures to evaluate impacts in the longer-term. Use the impact evaluation model at the bottom of this page to stimulate discussion and thinking.

### 3.5 IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Obtaining tangible impacts of AP interventions on the performance of colleagues, as with similar research on the impact of coaching and mentoring, is not always an easy process. Much of the impact will be intangible and the benefits may not be realised in the short-term, making it tempting to measure what is easy to measure rather than what is important to measure.

## AP IMPACT EVALUATION USING THE KIRKPATRICK MODEL<sup>24</sup>



<sup>23</sup> Miles, J. (2016) *Four ways to help CPD Sessions have a long-term impact*. Optimus Education. Available at: <https://my.optimus-education.com/four-ways-help-cpd-sessions-have-long-term-impact>. (Accessed: 4th September 2019).

<sup>24</sup> Kirkpatrick, D. L. & Kirkpatrick, J. D. (2006) *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*. Third Edition. San Francisco, Berrett Koehler



## IMPACT EVALUATION MATRIX

Likely sources of evidence: ➡ Evidence sought at: ⬇	Teaching and learning colleagues	APs or equivalent role	AP Manager, Curriculum Managers, other managers (e.g. Quality)	Quality improvement documentation and feedback
Individual level	Learner feedback, self-assessment	Comparison pre and post intervention	Appraisals	Individual teaching & learning performance
Team or department level	Putting learning into practice across teams	Collaborative activities	Learning walks	Internal audit
Organisational level	Staff survey	Organisation wide teaching & learning performance	Success rates and other department/team data	Inspection profiles and reports

Adapted from original evaluation model: IES (2006)<sup>25</sup>

The impact evaluation matrix above looks at evaluation from a range of different sources and perspectives. The matrix can help you to identify both long and short-term measures as well as measures for both tangible and intangible outcomes. It can be used to help an organisation identify what evaluation measures are currently being used to assess the impact of APs and how effective they are being. This will prompt useful discussions about what might need to be developed, enhanced or changed.

The potential sources of evidence listed in the table below are not exhaustive but are designed to help you reflect on what you currently have available to help you measure the impact of APs. This will enable you to choose which sources best help you measure the long and short-term impacts you are seeking. Take a look also at some of the collaborative case studies (for example [South Devon College and Bridgwater and Taunton College](#)) to see what sources of evidence they used to monitor and evaluate the AP-led activities they introduced.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF EVIDENCE			
ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL	PROCESS INDICATORS	TEAM OR DEPARTMENT LEVEL	INDIVIDUAL LEVEL
<b>Organisation performance based</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching and learning quality (a well-constructed, well-taught curriculum)</li> <li>Return on investment (Cost-effectiveness/cost-benefit)</li> <li>External verification reports</li> <li>Inspection profiles and reports</li> <li>Progress 8 measures</li> <li>Value added (distance travelled)</li> <li>Achievement and progression data</li> <li>Success rates</li> </ul> <b>People based</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff absence/sickness</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback</li> <li>Employee attitudes/organisational climate/staff survey</li> <li>Credibility/reputation/satisfaction among external stakeholders</li> <li>Staff retention and motivation</li> <li>Training needs analysis</li> <li>Exit interviews</li> </ul>	<b>Organisation performance based</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colleague and manager satisfaction with the AP support interventions</li> <li>Performance and quality of the AP's interventions</li> <li>Learning transfer – sharing learning between colleagues and using it in different contexts</li> <li>Collaborations leading to improvements and sharing of good practice</li> <li>Cost per individual supported</li> <li>Administration arrangements</li> <li>Readiness for change</li> <li>Resilience and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal audit and quality improvement processes (e.g. departmental/team SAR and QIP)</li> <li>Learning walks</li> <li>Peer support and other collaborative activities</li> <li>One to ones</li> <li>Internal verification reports</li> <li>Learner voice</li> <li>Departmental/team data (attendance, punctuality, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback ratings (learners, colleagues and managers)</li> <li>Confidence to try out new approaches</li> <li>Teaching and learning observations by APs, peers and others</li> <li>Achievement of teaching and learning improvement objectives</li> <li>Comparisons pre and post AP interventions</li> <li>Skill level/knowledge level of both AP and teaching and learning colleagues</li> <li>Appraisal</li> <li>Self-assessment</li> <li>Teaching and learning performance (e.g. learner understanding)</li> <li>One to ones</li> </ul>

<sup>25</sup> Institute for Employment Studies (2006) *Practical Methods for Evaluating Coaching*. Available at: <https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/430.pdf>. (Accessed 4th September 2019).

**Development activity**

Use the impact evaluation matrix and the sources of evidence list to help identify your approach to evaluating the impact of APs. Bring together a team from across the organisation and ask them to reflect on the following questions.

- What is currently in place that we could use to populate our matrix?
- What is currently not being measured that should be measured?
- What do we need to develop, enhance or continue to use, to effectively measure the impact of our APs?
- Which evaluation activities would provide us with the best evidence of impact and be the most efficient and effective use of our time?
- How can we use the impact data to develop our future work?

It is also important to adopt a pragmatic approach to identifying some of the qualitative and more intangible benefits of the work undertaken by APs. The following key questions might help you with this:

- Do we have greater clarity of what is wanted/needed to do as a result of the AP intervention?
- What actions have APs and their teaching and learning colleagues taken? What are they doing differently?
- What impacts can they define and attribute to those changes?
- Can these impacts be assessed from multiple perspectives? If so, what other perspectives could be used?

A simple 'yes' or 'no' answer isn't acceptable here. What is required is detailed evidence through example (a coherent narrative of change) and input from as many sources as possible – your perspective as the AP manager, teaching and learning colleagues, other key stakeholders, the APs themselves and interested observers. This [video](#) produced by [East Riding of Yorkshire Council and City of York](#) shows managers, APs and teachers discussing the rich impacts of AP interventions on staff motivation, energy, teaching practices and learners. Talking-head videos can be a powerful way of demonstrating some of the qualitative and more intangible benefits of the work undertaken by APs.

### 3.6 MAKING A COMPELLING BUSINESS CASE FOR APs

A business case provides the opportunity to persuade senior managers and other stakeholders, such as governors, of the value of your proposal to implement or develop the role of APs. It is your opportunity to identify the costs and benefits and the return on investments, both financial and social (e.g. staff cohesion, morale and the alignment of all colleagues around quality improvement), and to demonstrate that you have thought through all aspects of your proposal fully.

To be successful the business case should satisfy a few key criteria.

- It must be based on solid, impact evidence.
- It should be detailed, with costings, resource requirements and expected financial impacts. You need to identify, as early as you can, your predicted Return on Investment (section 3.2) i.e. what are the costs and benefits of the activity and what would be the cost of not doing anything?
- It should demonstrate that you have carefully set out how the AP role will be initiated, implemented and sustained in the longer term, i.e. you have set out longer term goals and objectives together with the ways they will be achieved.
- It should be objective, presenting alternative options for the improvements you are trying to make and explaining why your proposal would be the best choice. i.e. don't just provide one solution, set out alternatives and identify why your preferred solution is the most viable.
- As a document, the business case must be succinct and clearly laid out. Many public sector organisations follow the business case guidance advice set out by central government. Take a look at this template which can be adapted for any project. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-alternative-delivery-models-toolkit/stage-6-business-case>. Alternatively you could use a framework such as ['a plan on a page'](#) to ensure you have a structure and coherent approach to your proposals

## TOP TIPS



- Plan how to evaluate the work of the APs before starting any interventions so baseline data can be collected.
- Tap into existing sources of organisational evidence and align with the AP intervention at the beginning of the project, and then again at the end.
- Consider devising meaningful methods of capturing impact of AP interventions such as [talking head videos](#) of learners' or teachers' reflections or a written or sound file evidence from the AP/manager/learners about changes to the teacher's practice and the perceived effect.
- Minimise resistance and increase response rates by letting all parties know before the AP intervention starts what evaluation measures will be used and how they will be expected to contribute.
- Be cautious when interpreting any findings, especially where the size of what is being evaluated is small.
- Support the transfer of learning back into practice by encouraging APs and teaching and learning colleagues to identify clear goals and objectives associated with any intervention and share these with the relevant curriculum managers so that they in turn can support the implementation process.
- Effective evaluation is not just a one-off activity that takes place at the end of a process; it can be really useful as an interim 'stock-take' to measure distance travelled, to identify what is going well, what APs need to do more or less of and to prioritise next steps.

## FURTHER RESOURCES



Brinkerhoff, R.O. (2003) *The Success Case Method: Find Out Quickly What's Working and What's Not*. Berrett-Koehler: San Francisco

### WEBLINKS

A '[comic strip](#)' from Manchester College providing a compelling narrative for impact of APs and their value for money

Action research into Effective CPD: [Improving the impact of Teachers CPD](#)

[A Guide to Social return on Investment](#)

[Further Education and Skills Handbook](#) (EIF 2019)

Institute for Employment Studies (2006) [Practical Methods for Evaluating Coaching](#)

Miles, J.: [Four ways to help CPD sessions have a long-term impact](#)

[Template for presenting a Business case](#) – Government Guidance

[Understanding risk management](#)

## Chapter 4: Skills required to manage and lead APs

### REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:



- What tools do you use to evaluate your own AP management performance and competence?
- What are your top three strengths as an AP manager? How do you know this?
- What have you done in the last three months to develop yourself as an AP manager?
- What leadership and management style are you currently using with your APs? What impact is this having?
- How do you support and facilitate your APs to undertake research that will identify new ways of working?

The previous chapters have focused on how you can effectively implement, develop and measure the impact of the AP role. This chapter focuses on your skills and qualities as an AP Manager.

Earlier in this guide we highlighted the diverse nature of the AP role, which is reflected by where they sit within the structure of an organisation, often working across teams and being led by various levels of management including middle and senior managers. As an AP manager, you will need to be aware of the complex interrelationships that exist so that you can develop mutual trust with all stakeholders. You will need to give APs space to think and freedom to act, modelling coaching and mentoring practices you expect APs to deploy with staff. You will also want to empower them to drive changes in practice and to try out and share new ways of improving teaching and learning.

All of this requires emotional intelligence (EI) – a strong sense of self-awareness, self-management and a deep understanding of others. It has been identified through the collaborative projects that this emotional intelligence also helps establish a culture of trust, which is essential to the work of the AP and the AP Manager.

### Development activity

The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD), working with Bath University, identified certain key factors that contribute to trustworthy leadership and management<sup>26</sup>. These have been adapted in the model below.

#### The Trustworthy Manager



What more could you do as a manager of APs to swiftly build a 'trustworthy' culture?

## 4.1 DEVELOPING YOUR OWN CRITICALLY REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

'Teachers and trainers are reflective and enquiring practitioners who think critically about their own educational assumptions, values and practice in the context of a changing contemporary and educational world.'<sup>27</sup>

Stephen J Brookfield identifies, in his book 'Becoming a critically reflective teacher'<sup>28</sup>, four lenses through which to develop your own self-awareness and subsequent practice. The four lenses are as follows:

1. Your own personal experience as a teacher and learner
2. Your students' eyes
3. Your colleagues' perceptions
4. Your theoretical understanding.

<sup>26</sup> CIPD and Bath University (2016) *Experiencing Trustworthy Leadership*. Research report. Available at: <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/strategy/leadership/trust-report>. (Accessed: 4th September 2019).

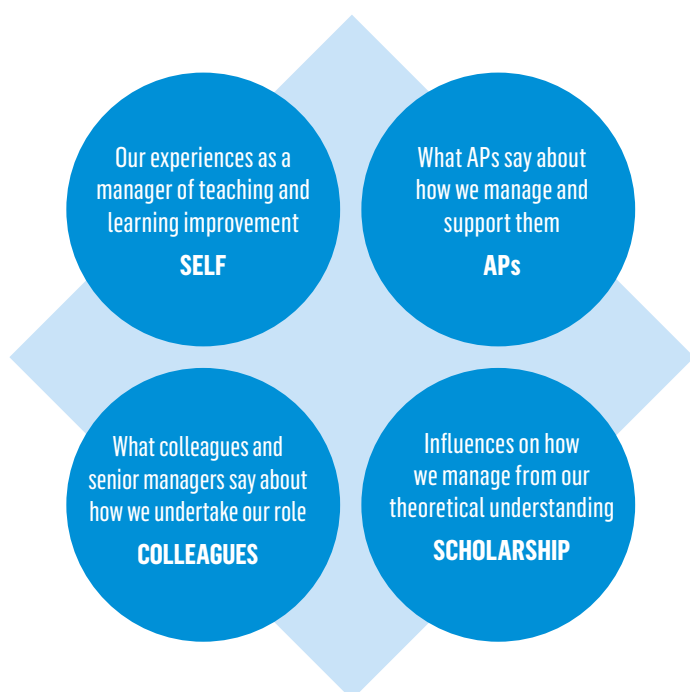
<sup>27</sup> ETF (2014) *Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers*. Available at: <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/support-practitioners/professional-standards/>. (Accessed: 4th September 2019).

<sup>28</sup> Brookfield, S.D. (2017) *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. Second Edition. San Francisco: Jossey Bas



These lenses can equally be applied to reflecting about your role as a manager of APs.

## BROOKFIELD'S FOUR LENSES OF REFLECTION



One of the crucial roles the AP manager needs to undertake is to initiate and support the improvement focused research that APs will carry out with colleagues. Action research is used extensively in the education sector especially in relation to the improvement of teaching and learning.

'The AP project gave permission for experimentation and provided fantastic opportunities. This included undertaking enhanced reflection with learners.'

[Advanced Practitioner, City of York Council Adult Learning](#)

## ACTION RESEARCH STEPS



As an AP manager you will need to ensure that APs are fully aware of the action research cycle and each of the steps within that cycle.<sup>30</sup> It may be useful to facilitate early exploration of the model to discuss how it will be used in full in the context of the work that APs will undertake. You can support the literature research that will need to be undertaken as you may have access to a wider range of sources than your APs. You will be able to act as a critical friend to the APs leading on the research and can then support them to put their findings into practice, broadcasting the learning from the research activity to colleagues across the organisation.

### Development activity

Use these four lenses to ask yourself the following questions which will help to develop your critically reflective practice.

As a manager of APs and others:

- What is your own self-assessment of how and how well you manage your colleagues (what are your strengths and development needs)?
- What do APs and others that you manage think about how you manage them?
- What do senior managers think about the AP role and how it should be developed?
- What evidence-informed practice and research are you using to improve your own practice and that of the APs you manage?

## 4.2 LEADING AND MANAGING ACTION RESEARCH

"A key feature which allowed APs to make the most of peer-learning opportunities was that, as (mostly) active teachers, they were able to trial and test things they observed in their own practice before giving advice to others. This informal Action Research lent their advice credibility amongst teaching staff."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Tyler, E. et al. (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation). Page 68

<sup>30</sup> Mettetal, G. (2015) *Improving Teaching Through Classroom Action Research*. The Professional & Organisational Network for Higher Education.

**TOP TIP**

Identify and then guide APs to specific resources to help develop their thinking around practitioner-led research. The research site on the Excellence Gateway is full of ideas that you might want to explore further:

<https://research.excellencegateway.org.uk/>

## 4.3 SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL AUDIT TOOLS

Three bespoke assessment and audit tools, with additional guidance as to their use, can be found here:

[AP Manager's Self-Assessment Tool](#)

[Colleagues' Assessment of the AP Manager Tool](#)

[AP Organisational Audit Tool](#)

### SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR AP MANAGERS

The AP manager's self-assessment tool has, in part, been influenced by the work carried out by ETF and the Said Business School to develop a [Leadership Competency Framework](#).

The tool aims to help you to:

- identify your strengths as a manager so that you can build on these
- reflect on your current AP leadership and management competencies
- reflect on whether your self-perceptions/assessments of these competencies are the same as others
- plan your future professional development.

The first stage of this process is to use the assessment tool to undertake an evaluation of your current levels of competence as an AP manager against five key aspects of the role:

- myself as an AP manager
- developing and communicating a clear vision for the AP role
- working collaboratively with APs and colleagues
- building and managing a high performing AP team
- managing change.

**TOP TIPS**

- Use the AP manager's self-assessment audit to identify your strengths and any development areas.
- Ask colleagues to also undertake the assessment on your behalf, using the [Colleagues' Assessment of the AP Manager Tool](#), so that you get feedback from a range of people to inform your own self-assessment.
- Use the feedback from your colleagues to facilitate professional discussions regarding your strengths and possible development areas. Don't forget the scaling scores are there to identify differences in understanding and viewpoints and are not to be viewed as a blunt performance score.
- If you are struggling to implement the recommendations in this guide and are in need of additional backing take a look at the 'Influence Analysis' model on page 18 of '[Creating Spaces to Think in Further Education and Training](#)' or the 'Circles of concern and circles of influence' model on page 23 of '[Coaching and Mentoring in Action](#).' Both of these will help you to identify who you can work with most effectively in your organisation and where you need to focus your energies.

### ORGANISATIONAL AUDIT TOOL

The organisational audit tool is based on research findings from the collaborative action research projects and from the good practice identified in this guide. Initially it can be used by the AP manager and the AP team to establish which aspects of the AP role are well established and understood by all and which need further development.

Senior managers can also use the audit tool, in conjunction with your feedback, to identify whether there are any strategic vision, planning and communication gaps between where you want to be and where you are now concerning the utilisation of APs. The audit could also be used with curriculum and subject teams, the quality team and tutors/teachers/trainers to gather a full organisational view of how people perceive the AP role.

The organisational audit tool focuses on the following four areas:

- the culture, vision and strategy for use of APs
- the scope of APs including their role and functions
- recruiting and retaining APs
- sustaining APs into the future.

## TOP TIPS



- Undertake the audit yourself and ask your AP colleagues to do the same independently.
- Compare your response with the responses of the APs and use this to collectively identify and agree priorities that build on strengths and address any gaps that have been identified.
- Use the outcomes from the discussions with your team to facilitate and lead conversations with senior managers asking them to complete the audit from their perspective.
- Jointly with senior managers come up with an organisational action plan (see example provided within the audit tool) that will support ongoing improvement of the AP role.

## FURTHER RESOURCES



Greatbatch, D. and Tate, S. (2018) *Teaching Leading and Governance in Further Education*. Research report, Department for Education.

Greaney, T. et al. (2014) *Leading in Volatile Times: Learning from Leadership Beyond the Sector*. ETF Report.

Mettetal, G. (2003) *Improving Teaching Through Classroom Action Research. Essays on Teaching Excellence: Toward the best in the Academy* Vol.14, No. 7, 2002-2003. A publication of the Professional and Organizational Development in Higher Education.

Raelin, J. (2006) *Does Action learning Promote Collaborative Leadership?* Academy of Management Learning and Education. Vol.5 No.2 152-168.

Brookfield, S.D. (2017) *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*: Second Edition. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.

## WEBLINKS

Brookfield, S. (2016) [So exactly what is critical about critical reflection?](#)

ETF: [How to lead when you are not in charge](#).

## ADDITIONAL TOOLS TO FACILITATE SELF-ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION

[ETF Professional Standards](#)

[ETF Professional Standards Self Development Workbook](#)

[ETF Leadership Competency Framework](#)

## Chapter 5: Long-term sustainability, keeping it going

### REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:



- How do you positively promote the role of APs and their successes across the organisation?
- What plans do you have in place to ensure the sustainability of the AP role?
- What are your best stories of the successes that APs have had – how could you effectively share those stories?
- What can you do further to integrate the AP role into the wider structure and priorities of the organisation?

AP managers and APs are working in a financially turbulent environment where organisations are challenged to maintain high standards against a backdrop of efficiency and other savings. APs, with their experience and skills, can provide a steadying hand, improving teaching and learning in the front-line with colleagues.

Managers will need to demonstrate resilience and continually evidence the ways that APs are integral to the organisation's ongoing, long-term quality improvement plan. This chapter outlines some of the activities you can undertake to champion APs, sustain the momentum of their work and secure the longer-term position of their role.

### 5.1 PROMOTING AND CELEBRATING THE ROLE OF APs

You will need to be an ambassador for your APs, supporting, championing and broadcasting their work whilst curating impact data to make a compelling business case for their role.

It is often said in further education that we don't promote our successes as actively as we should. The same applies to internal communications, where often successes are not shared or celebrated between teams. Some simple approaches you could adopt to address this could include:

- sharing short updates, successes and examples of APs' work as an agenda item on selected meetings

- securing personalised recognition for APs from senior management
- sharing team successes with other teams
- broadcasting internal 'successes' using internal networking (e.g. an online blog, discussion board or newsletter)
- verbally sharing 'good news' stories encouraging a range of professional conversations both formal and informal
- capturing and sharing tacit knowledge (the knowledge you have gathered from your teaching and learning experiences that are not codified or written down)
- rewarding success – not necessarily financial (see section 5.3 below)
- using internal social media and other knowledge sharing organisational tools to showcase the work of APs, for example setting up a 'meet your AP page' on your organisation's internal Moodle.





## 5.2 INTERNAL MARKETING – SHARING KEY MESSAGES THAT HAVE IMPACT

'APs have broken down barriers of communication, improving opportunities to share good practice and promote best practice across groups involved and on digital platforms.'

[Doncaster and North Lyndsey Colleges](#)

Whilst evidence from data is important, it doesn't necessarily engage fully with colleagues at an emotional level. In order to engage with those powerful emotions marketing theory has identified certain elements that make a message clear and powerful.

A message that 'sticks' is one that is:

- S** – Simple: make sure you identify no more than three clear impacts that an AP intervention has had.
- U** – Unexpected: identify an unexpected, positive result of an AP's support, for example an improvement in a colleague's wellbeing.
- C** – Concrete: share an idea or approach, something tangible that colleagues can take and apply to their own practice.
- C** – Credible: show how, as a result of support from an AP a colleague has made real steps in improving their practice, seek colleagues to act as great role models to inspire others.
- E** – Emotional: link the benefits of an AP support to the emotional factors that everyone in the organisation can recognise, for example the difference the support has made to improving the teaching of colleagues and the difference this has made to learners. The improved confidence and motivation of colleagues that comes with seeing and being part of this improvement.
- S** – Stories: don't just share what happened, a good story has a hero, a goal, a challenge, a mentor or coach and a positive outcome, finally it suggests what the reader can do next.<sup>31</sup>

## 5.3 MAINTAINING THE LONGEVITY OF APs

In the current climate being able to sustain the AP role is challenging. Therefore, you may need to think creatively when recruiting and retaining APs. Research indicates the importance of highlighting the 'soft benefits' of the role. Many coaches and APs have already seen their career prospects enhanced. APs have also noted how the nature of the role is motivational in itself and leads to better 'job satisfaction from supporting and motivating other practitioners to excel'.<sup>32</sup> In addition, a range of approaches have been used by organisations to incentivise and fund the role. These have included offering remission within the organisational structure, providing overtime payments, honorarium payments, giving small incentives such as vouchers and a meal or an extra few days of leave.

## 5.4 APs AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

In order to secure the sustainability of the AP role you will also need to work closely with human resources (HR) to ensure that the role sits comfortably with the organisation's plans to manage and develop talent. Effective APs are potentially a source of future leaders and managers within the institution and as such HR need to be aware of the work they are undertaking and the skills and qualities they possess. With your support, plans can then be put in place to ensure that such talent is recognised and nurtured.

The role of the AP manager is both exciting and challenging but it is one that is critical to the success of any AP programme. You are the conduit for communication both upwards and downwards (not always an easy position to be in). You are integral to ensuring that the senior management's quality improvement strategy is effectively implemented through your deployment of APs. Finally you provide the whole organisation with clear evidence of the improvements being made and are a critical first element in a successful approach to distributed and collaborative leadership.

<sup>31</sup> Heath, C. and Heath, D. (2008) *Made to Stick*. London: Random House

<sup>32</sup> Tyler, E. et al. (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*, (Education and Training Foundation).

## TOP TIPS



- Take a look at the [collaborative case studies](#) to see how other organisations have engaged with staff at an 'emotional level' in order to raise the profile of APs. (For example find out how [Bournemouth and Poole College & Kingston Maurward College](#) used humour as part of a 'Meet your AP' page on their websites. See also how they created celebratory postcards to capture short, positive stories about effective practice.)
- Use internal marketing and other proactive promotional approaches to successfully share successes and raise the ongoing profile of the APs.
- Identify and implement new and exciting ways to use the APs' skills and competencies to enhance teaching and learning.
- Actively engage with people across the organisation to identify the unexpected ways the AP role benefits the organisation and all the people working in it.
- Where possible empower and support your APs, enabling them to give confidence to the colleagues they work with in their role.

## FURTHER RESOURCES



Heath, C., and Heath, D. (2008) *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*. London: Random House Books.

Berger, J. (2013) *Contagious: Why Things Catch On*. Simon and Schuster. New York

Tyler et al. (2017) Institute for Employment Studies. *Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education*. Executive Summary.

## WEBLINKS

Example of [AP marketing materials](#) from Manchester College

Government [Guidance Template](#) for a Communications plan

Innovation in FE – Further Education Strategic Leadership [Programme notes](#)

Leading learning and letting go: [Building expansive learning environments in FE](#). A paper on the Leading Learning seminar held at the Institute of Education on 29 February 2012

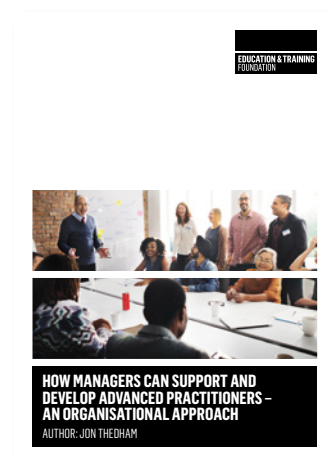
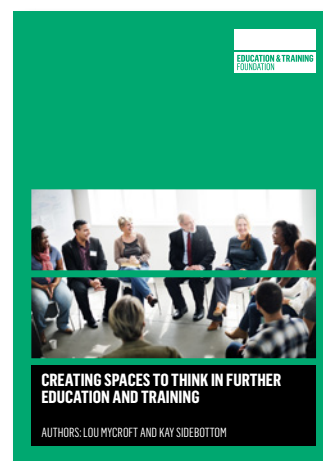
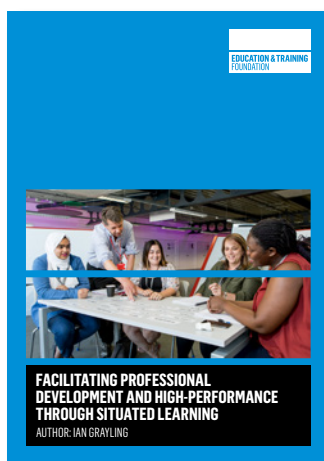
Helen Timperley: [Teacher professional learning and development](#)

## Next steps

We hope that this guide has enthused you to try out and apply some of the practical ideas and approaches that have been explored. We also hope that it has sparked your interest to find out more about the other guides in this suite.

Take a look at '[Facilitating Professional Development and High-Performance through Situated Learning](#)' which builds on this guide and provides additional ideas as to how you can enhance the performance of APs both as individuals and when working in teams. The other guides are also packed full of resources and tips that you can use with APs to hone their coaching skills and inspire others to strive for excellence in their professional practice.

Finally, the [Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers in the Further Education Sector](#) are another valuable tool to add to your toolkit for supporting the work of APs. You can use them as a benchmark to evidence high-quality teaching, learning and assessment as well as effective professional practice. They also provide you with a 'common language' to use in your discussions with APs, other managers and teaching and learning colleagues.



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