



Supporting smaller training independent training providers in collaborative contracting

Guidance for LSIS advisers: using the partnership working and planning toolkit

Partnership working and planning

The following table provides guidance on how LSIS advisers can use each resource in the partnership working and planning toolkit. The first column shows the text that is likely to be uploaded to the Excellence Gateway. This explains what the overall toolkit is designed to achieve followed by a description of each section, along with a brief introduction to each individual resource. The second column provides additional guidance for LSIS advisers to help them judge when and how to use the resource with partnerships and providers. The third column shows the location and file name of each resource or the relevant web link.

Description/what is in this resource?	Application/how you can use this resource as an adviser?	Links/tools
<p>“Collaboration is a voluntary option, in that the choice of partners with which to collaborate should never be imposed. No provider should be expected to consider collaboration with another provider as an option unless they feel it is in their – and, of course, their learners’ – interests. Ideally collaboration needs to be <i>self-driven</i> as opposed to an imposed solution. “ <i>Sub-contracting toolkit</i>, Association of Learning Providers (Dec 2010)</p> <p>This toolkit aims to help partnerships establish or enhance the effectiveness of their approach to collaboration on strategy and delivery.</p>	<p>The toolkit is in four sections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does effective partnership working look like? Partnerships just setting up might start here; 2. Where are we now? Provides tools to assess the state of play of any existing or emerging partnership and its practices. Existing partnerships may like to start here; 3. Where do we want to be? Will help partnerships to set or retune direction, supporting structures and ways of working; and 4. How are we going to get there? Provides some guidance on collaborative implementation planning that might be used instead of individual providers’ existing formats 	<p>Quote from Subcontracting toolkit - page 11</p>

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<p>Section 1: What does effective partnership working look like?</p>		
<p>This section introduces the benefits of partnership working and an outline of the features that have been identified as significant indicators of effectiveness. By the end of this section, providers and partnerships will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be able to take more informed decisions about next steps in developing partnership practice. <p>There are three resources in this section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ assessing the benefits of collaboration - for more detail see the source site; ▪ a case study on the Excellence Gateway; and ▪ a framework of guiding principles 	<p>Resource PW2: can be used to prompt discussion at the stage when a provider is considering going into partnership. This has been adapted from the Employers' Organisation site for local government, <i>Smarter partnerships</i> – link provided (also used for later resources). This could be augmented by some of the 'harder-nosed' questions in the Subcontractors' Toolkit</p> <p>The case study illustrates how some of these benefits have been realised in the London Central hub</p> <p>Resource PW3: a handy one-pager focussing on partnership working that provides insights into key features for success. This may be useful as a quick review tool by advisers and partnerships: it may help to open up discussion. There is a prompt box for reflection at the end.</p>	<p>PW2_ assessing_benefits_of_collaboration Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>Site is on: http://www.lgpartnerships.com/resources/lead-benpart.asp</p> <p>Case study: http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=wellmanagedsubcontractors/ondoncentralhub</p> <p>PW3_framework_of_guiding_principles Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p>

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<p>Section 2: Where are we now?</p> <p>The section is relevant to existing partnerships that may need to expand or re-tune, or to an embryonic partnership. It provides some starting points to help take stock.</p> <p>Diagnostic tools in this section fall into two sets. The first set will help a partnership to recognise the characteristics and stage it is operating at, and prompts thinking about how partnerships might develop their processes further. The second set is designed to support assessment of the effectiveness of collaborative practice.</p> <p>By the end of this section, providers and partnerships will have begun to work out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the key features of partnership processes likely to secure success; and ▪ how to improve partnership qualities and practice. <p>The sets and each tool uses a different framework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnership lifecycle model: PowerPoint and diagnostic tool 2. a) Tests for an effective partnership (at two levels of detail) on interactive screens as part of the local government Smarter Partnerships site <li style="padding-left: 20px;">b) Review tool <p>Plus a Partnership toolkit from Stockport that combines some of the above approaches.</p>	<p>These tools are to support review or a 'healthcheck'. They might be used by individual providers separately first and then the observations of partners compared as the basis of a discussion, or they can be used by partnership representatives collectively. Any of these tools might be facilitated by an adviser. It is suggested that advisers familiarise themselves with these different frameworks as some partnerships might respond better to one set, another to a different set.</p> <p>The first set of tools is about recognising the characteristics and stage of a partnership with prompts to think about how partnership processes might be developed further. Both resources are based on a partnership life cycle model: forming, frustration, functioning, flying and failing, and could be used in a workshop setting.</p> <p>Resource PW4: a PowerPoint introducing the <i>partnership lifecycle</i> model</p> <p>Resource PW5: a <i>diagnostic tool</i> to support a discussion</p> <p>The second set aims to assess the effectiveness of collaborative practice:</p> <p>The <i>Smarter Partnerships</i> site has eight tests of an effective partnership on interactive screens that is based on a four part model: leadership, trust, learning, and management for performance. The details can be found on a pdf</p> <p>Resource PW6 – an alternative <i>review tool</i> that uses a more detailed set of features of collaborative working as prompts for self assessment. Again, this might offer start points for a discussion.</p> <p>In addition, a Partnership Toolkit developed by Stockport Partnership (2006) pulls together all of these aspects and provides some similar tools. It is suggested that advisers browse this for additional ideas as needed.</p>	<p>PW4_ partnership_ lifecycle PowerPoint located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>PW5_ partnership_ lifecycle_ diagnosti c Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>Introduction is on http://www.lgpartnerships.com/howhealthy.asp and more details are on http://www.lgpartnerships.com/digging.asp or as a pdf</p> <p>PW6_reviewing_collaboartative_work ing Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>http://www.stockportpartnership.org.uk/pdf/PartnershipsToolkit_Aug06.pdf</p>

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Section 3: Where do we want to be?		
<p>Research consistently shows that having a clear and shared sense of purpose is critical to effective partnership working. Working through this process as a partnership can also strengthen relationships and trust between partners as you discuss values and surface assumptions. It is only when partners have established consensus on direction of travel that strategy, and then operations can be planned.</p> <p>By the end of this section, providers and partnerships will have been introduced to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a process for developing vision; ▪ a framework of questions covering key elements of strategic planning. <p>There are two resources in this section:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating a vision - powerpoint that includes an activity to help partnerships think about and create a vision 2. Challenges of collaboration - is an activity that helps partnerships engage in a range of challenging elements 	<p>All activities need to be tackled by representatives or leaders from all partners.</p> <p>Resource PW7: a PowerPoint that can be used to structure a workshop session for partners that focuses on generating a vision. The presentation includes an activity to achieve this and concludes with some prompts on setting strategic priorities. This material would be best used with an external facilitator such as an adviser. The activity may need expanding and the strategic priorities section could be separated out.</p> <p>Resource PW8: is also an activity. It consists of a set of questions to promote discussion on the challenges related to forging effective collaboration, such as core values, assumptions and expectations. It will require substantial time and an adviser could usefully help a group to structure the discussion and the feedback. A partnership might choose to tackle current priority sections only using a leadership group, or delegate sections to different groups and share discussion outcomes in a workshop setting.</p>	<p>PW7_ creating_ a_ vision PowerPoint located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>PW8_ challenges_ of_ collaboration Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p>

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Section 4: How are we going to get there?		
<p>Once vision and shared strategic priorities are agreed, the next stage is to work on an implementation plan. Most providers will have their own planning frameworks to cover delivery and supporting processes. However, the partnership will need a collective plan to ensure <i>shared</i> strategy and operations are achieved.</p> <p>This section aims to offer useful alternatives to the approaches that may already be in use by individual providers. The tools form two sets: the first tools are diagnostic to help partnerships review the adequacy of current planning approaches, and the second set provides guidance and an example implementation-planning format.</p> <p>By the end of this section, providers and partnerships will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ choose and use an appropriate format for implementation planning. <p>There are two sets of resources in this section:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diagnostics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Partnership responsibility tool (from <i>Smarter partnerships</i>) b) A readiness for implementation planning tool 2. Guidance: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Framework of guiding principles for implementation planning b) Guidance on implementation planning including a format c) Top tips for implementation planning 	<p>Set 1: Diagnostics (two tools each operating at different levels)</p> <p>An adviser should be able to gauge at which level a partnership needs prompts – strategic or process levels. Or alternatively they might be useful as a pair:</p> <p>Resource PW9 (adapted from Smarter Partnerships): focuses on strategic level partnerships. The tool provides starting points for planning related to four aspects: reading and influencing the environment; developing strategy and gaining commitment; planning, securing resources and implementation; and monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>Resource PW10: is more focused on key processes such as planning for communication, quality assurance and equality and diversity and uses the method of benchmarking a partnership's state of planning based on a graded series of indicators. Work with this tool could be 'top-of-the-head' style or at more depth through referencing evidence.</p> <p>Set 2: Guidance</p> <p>Resource PW11: a handy one-pager lists key features that research shows are key to success. This could be used to support a review-type conversation as a starter for more substantive or challenging discussions about implementation</p> <p>Resource PW12: more detailed guidance to help construct an implementation plan, includes an example plan format and a planning review format. Tabling this as an example may help to encourage providers to share their current approaches and formats</p> <p>Resource PW13: a succinct list that may offer additional prompts to partnerships already well developed. There are points here about looking outwards to benchmark and learn from practice elsewhere</p>	<p>PW9_ partnership_responsibility tool Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>PW10_readiness_for_implementation_planning Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>PW11_framework_of_guiding_principles_for_implementation_planning Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>PW12_guidance_on_implementation_planning Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p> <p>PW13_top_tips_for_implementation_planning Word document located on the Excellence Gateway and your CD Rom</p>