

STAGE 4

FORMATIVE REVIEW OF LEARNING

ETFOUNDATION.CO.UK

Natspec has produced
this guidance on behalf
of the Education and
Training Foundation.



RARPA Stage Four: What is involved?

Formative review of learning

Stage Four is about assessing learner progress through a formative review of learning that:

- reviews and records the progress that is being made during the learning programme
- uses creative approaches to gain regular feedback from learners and other key stakeholders
- recognises learner progress across the whole curriculum
- includes person-centred reviews to discuss progress and ensure learning, support and care needs are being met
- provides information, advice and guidance about the learner's next steps using an accurate measure of progress so far.

When the formative review of learning is well managed:

- there is a record of progress and updated learning objectives that demonstrate what the learner can do and knows now, that is different from before
- progress outside of set objectives is captured and used to inform planning
- the learner and key stakeholders are involved in assessing progress and it is meaningful for them, feedback is personalised to the individual
- learners know what they have achieved and what the next steps are
- learners can make informed decisions about destinations based on assessment of their progress
- there is an effective management information system that collates assessment data
- staff understand their role and responsibilities in conducting assessments and this can be done efficiently, without creating unnecessary burdens for staff or learners
- evidence of progress is moderated for consistency and against quality measures
- evidence from progress reports and reviews is used to make improvements, for individuals and for the overall learning programme.

Example from a Provider

The E-portfolio system is a creative way of demonstrating evidence of the achievements of learners in one central place that is easily accessible to learners and stakeholders. E-portfolios consist of a range of written, photographic and film representation of learners' achievements and they have been particularly effective in conveying the progress of learners within annual review meetings where parents have been able to 'see first-hand' what their young person has been working towards and can see 'real' evidence of this. This is proving to be a far more powerful tool than written reports.

(Independent Specialist College)

The link below take you to documents, produced by post-16 providers, that can support at this RARPA Stage

[An example of a learner target tracker \(opens in web browser\)](#). It shows how learners can record their progress against specific targets.

[A template of a Key Worker Report \(opens in web browser\)](#) used to record progress and achievement.

[A template of a Transition Plan \(opens in web browser\)](#) used in preparation for moving on from college.

[A template \(opens in web browser\)](#) to support recording transition visits as part of a planned transition from college.

RARPA Stage Four: Key Points from the Education Inspection Framework for Further Education and Skills 2019

The Education Inspection Framework sets the standards against which Ofsted will judge the overall effectiveness of a provider. There is a strong focus on how providers meet the standards for learners with SEND across all four key judgements. Using a RARPA process effectively enables providers to demonstrate they are ensuring learners with SEND are not disadvantaged compared to other learners and can access high quality provision that is ambitious, challenging and meets needs. Understanding how RARPA links to the requirements of the Education Inspection Framework supports providers to consider how they are meeting the standards and providing evidence to demonstrate continual quality improvement.

RARPA Stage Four: Formative review of learning

From 'Quality of Education' for all learning programmes (para 171)

- Teachers check learners' understanding effectively and identify and correct misunderstandings. (178)
- Teachers ensure that learners embed key concepts in their long-term memory and apply them fluently and consistently. (178)
- Leaders and teachers have designed and they deliver the subject curriculum in a way that allows learners to transfer key knowledge to long-term memory. The curriculum is sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what learners know and can do and learners can work towards defined end points. (178)
- Teachers use assessment to check learners' understanding in order to inform teaching. (178)
- Teachers use assessment to help learners to embed and use knowledge fluently, to develop their understanding, and to gain, extend and improve their skills and not simply memorise disconnected facts. (178)
- When used effectively, assessment can help learners to embed and use knowledge fluently and to show that they are competent in applying their skills. The results of effective assessment assist teachers to produce clear and achievable next steps for learners. However, assessment is too often carried out in a way that creates unnecessary burdens for staff and learners. It is therefore important that leaders and teachers understand its limitations and avoid misuse and overuse. (179)
- Teachers and leaders use assessment well, for example to help learners embed and use knowledge fluently and flexibly, to evaluate the application of skills, or to check understanding and inform teaching. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and do not use it in a way that creates unnecessary burdens for staff or learners. (191)

RARPA Stage Four: Key Themes from the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice informs the further education and skills sector of its statutory duties in relation to young people and education. Where providers understand their duties to the Code of Practice and how this links to RARPA they will be able to provide evidence that learners are achieving their potential and increasing their opportunities for good life outcomes. The Code of Practice advises a person-centred approach and this links well to RARPA's focus on personalised learning outcomes and measuring achievement from an individual's starting points. Throughout the Code of Practice, providers are expected to work in partnership with health, social care and other educational providers to support good life outcomes.

'Colleges should keep a student's profile and record of support up to date to inform discussions with the student about their progress and support. This should include accurate information to evidence the SEN support that has been provided over a student's time in college and its effectiveness. They should record details of what additional or different provision they make to meet a student's SEN and their progress towards specified outcomes. This should include information about the student's SEN, interventions and the support of specialists. The information should be used as part of regular discussions with the student and, where appropriate, the family, about the student's progress, the expected outcomes and planned next steps.' (7.25) SEND Code of Practice

Statutory duties for FE Colleges, 6th form colleges, 16-19 academies and independent specialist colleges (Section 41 Children and Families Act 2014) include:

- duty to cooperate with local authorities in making arrangements for children and young people with SEN
- duty to admit a young person if the institution is named on the EHC Plan
- duty to regard the Code of Practice
- duty to use their best endeavours to secure special educational provision to meet young people's needs for those with or without an EHC Plan.



Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities

January 2015

RARPA Stage Four: Key Themes continued

Key themes from the SEND Code of Practice	At RARPA Stage Four providers should:
Regular review and reporting of how the learner's special educational needs are being met through support and specialist interventions.	Keep up to date and accurate records of all support and interventions that are in place. Review support and care plans regularly to ensure needs are being met effectively and this is supporting progress towards outcomes.
Effective use of resources to provide support.	Review how additional learning support is enabling progress to be made. Check that resources are deployed effectively and identify where support needs to be targeted, addressing any issues of inequalities between groups of learners. Provide evidence of the additional support in place, how this meets need and supports learner progress. Case studies may be useful to demonstrate this.
The local authority is informed about the progress of learners with special educational needs and any changing needs. Short term objectives are always considered against long-term outcomes.	Invite local authority representatives to learner reviews, especially when needs have changed. This should be with the learner's consent. Send written documentation to local authorities as evidence of learner progress towards outcomes.
There is evidence that the learner is making progress towards their long-term outcomes and these include the four preparing for adulthood pathways.	Ensure the curriculum provides opportunities for learners to make progress across the four pathways. Discuss the four pathways at learners' reviews, check that short term objectives support progress towards long-term outcomes in each of the preparing for adulthood pathways.
Transition planning is in place. There is joined up work between education, health and social care so learners and their parents and carers do not have to keep re-telling different professionals their story. Learners have the right, from the age of 16, to make their own decisions about their future.	Organise progress reviews earlier in the year for learners who will be leaving that year. Use the evidence from progress reports to inform planning and next steps towards the chosen destination. Invite representatives from the local authority and other multi-disciplinary professionals who will have a role in the learner's life. Prepare the learner for the review so they can share their progress and make informed decisions about their transition. This may involve arranging for advocacy services through the local authority.

RARPA Stage Four: Key Themes continued

Key themes from the SEND Code of Practice	At RARPA Stage Four providers should:
There is a person-centred approach to reviewing progress and support. This keeps the focus on the young person and what matters to them as they prepare for their future.	Use person-centred thinking tools to help prepare for progress and transition reviews. These provide an inclusive way to gather information and ask questions about what is important to the learner now and in the future.
Where needs cannot be met by a provider, external specialist support is accessed e.g. educational psychology service.	Provide an assessment process that clearly identifies where needs cannot be met internally and how to make a referral for external services. When a learner without an EHC Plan is not making the expected progress and this is due to unmet needs, an EHC Plan assessment can be requested from the local authority.

RARPA Stage Four: Questions providers should ask themselves about Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans)

The further education and skills sector has statutory responsibilities for young people with EHC Plans. At each stage of the RARPA process there are actions providers can take to ensure they are meeting these requirements. Young people aged 16 and over have the right to make their own decisions about their plans and should be involved, in appropriate ways, at each stage of the RARPA process to agree their long-term outcomes based on what is meaningful to them. Providers should challenge EHC Plan outcomes that are not person-centred, relevant to the individual and supportive of good life outcomes across the four preparing for adulthood pathways of education and employment, health, independent living and friends, relationships and community.

Questions to ask yourselves	If your answer is no or you are unsure
Does the progress identified during formative assessment link to the long-term aspirations and outcomes in the EHC Plan and do these include the four preparing for adulthood pathways?	Identify how the learner's progress is supporting them towards their long-term outcomes and if any changes need to be made to outcomes or short-term objectives. If outcomes are not on track to be achieved within their timescale, decide what else needs to be done by the provider or by others to get progress back on track. If outcomes require amendment contact the local authority to discuss this.
Are staff fully aware of learners' views on their progress and what might be preventing or supporting their progress?	Plan annual reviews of EHC Plans with the learner. Use person-centred thinking tools to support the learner to decide what they want to say and how they want to say it. The EHC Plan is theirs and their voice is central. For learners who do not use formal communication, develop personalised ways for learners to meaningfully participate and involve staff who know the learner well and can advocate on their behalf.
Does the local authority have accurate and sufficient information and evidence about the progress made towards long-term outcomes?	Prepare progress reports in advance of an EHC Plan annual review. These must be sent out to the local authority and other invitees at least two weeks in advance. EHC Plan reviews will include a discussion around the learner's progress against shorter term objectives, linked to long-term outcomes. The local authority will need to be satisfied that the learner is making expected progress from the evidence presented at the annual review. When deciding to cease an EHC Plan, local authorities will examine if educational outcomes have been achieved. Any amendments to the EHC Plan made during the review must be recorded and returned to the local authority by the appropriate deadline. (see para 9.176 for details of deadlines)

RARPA Stage Four: Questions continued

Questions to ask yourselves	If your answer is no or you are unsure
Has the learner been involved in discussing their chosen destination in the light of formative assessment?	Provide impartial information, advice and guidance services to support the learner to make informed decisions about their future. Formative assessment should enable the learner to plan for their next stage. If a learner wants to continue their post-16 education at an alternative provider there are specific deadlines for an EHC Plan review to take place (para 9.181). In all situations, if a learner is leaving at the end of a learning programme there should be evidence of transition planning at their annual review.

RARPA Stage Four: Links to person-centred tools to use at this stage

Person-centred approaches support providers to find out what is important to a learner, what matters to them most and what support strategies work best for them. Providers can use these person-centred thinking tools to support conversations with learners, their parents and carers and other multi-disciplinary professionals throughout the 5 RARPA stages. The tools prompt questions and ways to gather information that keeps the person at the centre. This works well with the RARPA focus on personalisation and emphasis on the learner voice.

Here are suggested tools for each stage of RARPA, produced by the Preparing for Adulthood Programme.

The first two tools are included at each stage because they are the key questions within a person-centred approach.

[What we like and admire about a person](#) - to help find out the person's strengths and qualities (opens in web browser)

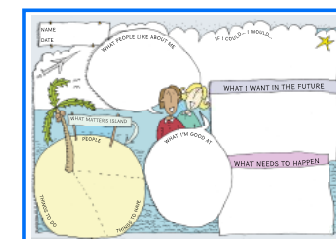
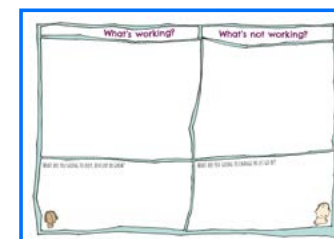
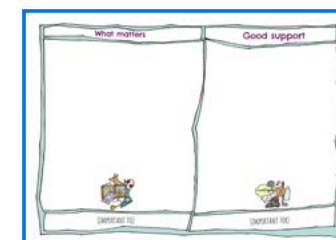
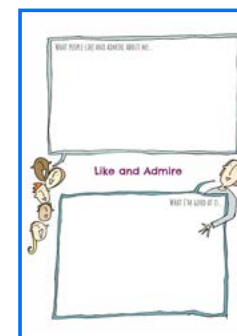
[What's important to and for me](#) - to help understand what matters to a person (opens in web browser)

Useful person-centred tools to support learner involvement during formative assessment and reviews.

[Working and not working](#) - to support a formative assessment process from the learner's perspective (opens in web browser)

[What matters island](#) - to prepare for progress reviews/annual reviews (opens in web browser)

[An outcome template for the four preparing for adulthood pathways](#) - to use at progress reviews/annual reviews (opens in web browser)



RARPA Stage Four: Quality Assurance

Use the examples of activities to measure quality assurance at this stage. The list is not exhaustive or prescriptive.

Providers may already have alternative or additional means of checking quality at each RARPA stage.

Evidence from these activities will inform providers' self-assessment reviews and quality improvement programmes.

Examples of quality assurance activity:

- Assess the quality of a sample of progress reports from different staff working across a programme. Check staff are following the organisation's guidelines for reporting on progress. This could include in class, face to face assessment and written progress reports. Provide staff with clear expectations and deadlines for reporting. Ensure this does not create an unreasonable workload.
- Collate data on what progress is being made across the curriculum for a sample of individual learners. Identify any specific patterns where progress is not as expected, as well as where progress is consistently high. Use this information to conduct a wider review of areas of the curriculum, to address quality issues and share best practice.
- Hold learner voice meetings or programme representative meetings to ask if learners are getting the feedback they need to understand their progress and what they need to do next. For learners with more complex needs, involve staff who know the learner well and parents and carers, if appropriate.
- Audit a sample of assessment records to determine how much use is being made of learner self-assessment and peer assessment alongside teacher assessment, and how effectively that is being done.
- Send questionnaires to parents and carers, if appropriate and to key stakeholders to determine whether they have a clear understanding of what progress is being made and whether this matches their expectations.
- Sample learners' work and related feedback/progress records for evidence that consistent judgements on progress are being made and that the language staff use is consistent and accessible to the learner.
- Observe in lesson assessment methods and ways of recording progress. Check they involve using creative approaches such as videos, photographs and displays of learner work that show progress against objectives. Identify best practice and share with staff teams.
- Use evidence from a review of formative assessment to identify staff CPD needs, including where performance management measures are required.

RARPA Stage Four: Quality Assurance continued

- Observe learner review meetings to identify how well staff keep the focus on the learner and how progress is linked to long term outcomes. Use a review checklist to compare if all staff facilitating reviews are:
 - enabling the learner to understand the progress they have made and what they need to do next to continue making progress
 - addressing areas where progress has not been as expected and deciding what action to take
 - identifying and arranging for the information, advice and guidance needed at this stage to support planning towards destinations, including any changes to a learner's future plans
 - relating learning to the four preparing for adulthood pathways to ensure good life outcomes
 - involving people who know the learner well
 - sharing information from reviews with appropriate people, including parents and carers, if appropriate and the local authority, if the learner has an EHC Plan.
- Audit learner care and support plans to identify if the support and interventions provided are enabling progress towards outcomes and not creating unnecessary dependency.
- Use information gathered across formative assessment quality assurance activities to provide evidence that learner progress is being made as expected and where it is not, there is a clear plan in place to address this.

Useful links

[Use this template \(opens in web browser\)](#) for an **internal** review of RARPA in your provision

[Use this template \(opens in web browser\)](#) for an **external** review of RARPA in your provision

The examples below are from post-16 providers who have completed an internal review of stage four of RARPA

[RARPA Standard 4 formative assessment in the context of work experience \(opens in web browser\)](#)

[Internal review of Standard 4 formative assessment \(opens in web browser\)](#)

RARPA Stage Four: Self Audit Tool

Use the self-audit tool to assess what you are already doing well and where you need to take further action.

Stage Four: Formative Review of Learning				Action Required
Do moderation activities lead to improvements in the quality of formative assessment that support learner progress?				
Do learners understand what they can now do and know, that is different from the start of their learning programme? Do they know what they need to do next?				
Is there evidence that progress towards short and/or medium-term learning objectives is linked to the achievement of long-term outcomes?				
Is the assessment of progress being used to support learners to consider their planned destinations? Is there information, advice and guidance available?				
For learners in a transition year, does formative assessment support their transition plans?				
Are learner reviews person-centred and do they involve relevant people who know the learner well? Are actions from reviews completed to deadlines?				
Are staff providing regular feedback to learners about their progress towards objectives and long-term outcomes, in accessible and creative ways?				
Is the scrutiny of learner work being used to improve consistency and quality of assessment?				
Do staff have the expertise and specialist knowledge to assess the progress of learners who do not use formal verbal communication? Are staff making accurate judgements on progress for these learners and is appropriate feedback being provided to them?				
Are learner support and care plans being regularly checked and updated in the light of formative assessment?				
Is there a comprehensive CPD plan in place to support staff to conduct high quality assessments?				
Can staff follow the formative assessment process without creating unnecessary burdens for themselves or learners?				

■ No evidence requires attention
 ■ Requires development
 ■ Evidence of this informs planning and delivery

RARPA Stage Four: Self Audit Tool continued

Use the self-audit tool to assess what you are already doing well and where you need to take further action.

Stage Four: Formative Review of Learning				Action Required
Are there staff performance measures linked to formative assessment?				
Do you have data that highlights any inequalities in progress by specific groups of learners e.g. by gender, ethnicity, disability or other special educational need?				
Is there sufficient evidence gathered from different sources to know if formative assessment is accurately measuring progress and where it is not, action is being taken to address this?				

■ No evidence requires attention
 ■ Requires development
 ■ Evidence of this informs planning and delivery